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HEÖTHA AND MELECH.

AND

Other Poems.

BY THE

REV. W. MACILWAINE, D.D.,

INCUMBENT OF ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, BELFAST.

Σὲ τοῦ αὐτοῦ μονάρχου.

Δὸς ἀντιμεῖν. δὸς ἀόιδεον.

Gregory Nazianzen.

LONDON :

LONGMANS, GREEN, READER, AND DYER ;

DUBLIN : HODGINS, FOSTER, & CO. ;

BELFAST : W. H. GREER.

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Edward Pooley - with kind regards of
Mr. Pooley the author -

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P R E F A C E .



IT was the author's intention to permit the pages which follow to make their own way, without any word whatever of preface or introduction. Second thoughts, however, have prompted him to prefix a few words to the trifling contribution to the poetry of the day which follows.

The first piece of the series, "Heötha and Melech," as will readily be perceived, is allegorical; nor need the circumstances which suggested the allegory be dwelt on, or perhaps, indeed, even mentioned. The events of the past year are of too recent, as well as in many respects too awakening a character, as regards Ireland and her Church, to allow them to slumber in the recollection of many. The poem in question was written partly as an alleviation of not a few cares and trials, accompanying the events referred to, and partly to give expression to some of the feelings and impressions thus left on the mind of the writer. Friends to whom it was shown, whether wisely or not remains to be proved, advised its publication. Being in itself too brief for separately appearing in print, the rest were added, in order that a volume of presentable size might

be produced. These latter were, for the greater part, occupants of the writer's desk, where they had lain, some of them for years ; a few had already been printed among the ephemeral productions of the time. On reviewing these, the writer felt that some friends might wish to see them in print, when, perhaps, he himself ceased to occupy his place among them, and that others might find in them some solace amidst care, or relief from anxiety ; and so they have been given to the Press.

Should any of the numerous and respectable body of Reviewers think his work not beneath their notice, the writer would venture one word, in the way of disarming the keenness of criticism, respecting the principal poem. It will, doubtless, occur to many who read the story of "Heötha and Melech," that some of its leading ideas are borrowed from the legendary lore of Ireland, and found embodied in the lyrics of her National Bard. This is at once admitted. The writer would only add, that in some of the instances wherein resemblance, if not, indeed, identity, may be discovered, the images, as far as he can trace their connexion, rose almost spontaneously in his own mind, their origin being, no doubt, due to early and almost forgotten associations.

Belfast, October, 1870.

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HEÖTHA AND MELECH.

Liber captivus avi verè similis est ;
Semel fugiendi si data est occasio
Satis est : nunquam post illum possis prendere.

PLAUTUS, *In Captivis*.

HEÖTHA AND MELECH.

I.

HER features told an Eastern tale. Those eyes,
Lustrous, and large, and dark, like liquid jet,
Curtain'd by lashes, silken and as dark,—
Those ebon tresses,—that complexion, bright,
And kissed by warmest suns, alike proclaimed
That from some land beyond the rolling wave
Her feet had hither wandered. On the shore,
And through the fields of Eirè trod the maid,
O'er its bleak mountains, by its glassy lakes,
With wild woods skirted. In her hand she bore
A wand, whereon she leant, when travel-worn,
Of fairest ivory. A molten ring
Of Eastern gold, such as kings' daughters wear,
Adorned her hand. A vesture white as snow,

And border'd with a thin-wrought scarlet line,
Tracing its graceful foldings, clothed her limbs,
Moving in symmetry, as 'twere to sound
Of dulcet music. Yet no sound was there,
Save of the wind, which sang along her path,
Or whispered through her waving locks that flowed
In shadowing luxuriance o'er her brow.
Sandall'd her feet ; for many a mile, I ween,
Those feet, though delicate, had trod ; yet still
Onward the maiden went, nor ever seemed
To weary. Round her neck, and resting on
Her bosom, fair and gauze-veil'd, hung a cross
Of sparkling emerald ; while the hand set free
From bearing her fair wand a volume held,
Inscribed with characters, most bright and clear,
The work of scribe skilled in elaborate art.
Close to her heart she pressed the volume rare ;
And when from mid-day sun in the green wood
The maid sought shelter, or by silent stream
Halted to lave her feet, by travel soiled,

Or slake her thirst, still from her side she drew
That book of precious lore and mused thereon.
And then her eye 'gan kindle, and up-raised
It sought its native heaven. Then, too, her smile
Beamed through the green wood, till the thrilling song
Of birds seemed blither, and the dew-dropped flowers
That gemmed the earth sent from their fragrant lips
More balmy odour, rising all around.
And as these song-birds carolled in mid air,
Or from o'erhanging bower, the maid, too, sang
A lay of passing sweetness. Words like these
Rose sweetly blithe, the burden of her song—

Sun ! that over field and fountain,
Ever radiant, smilest still ;
Grass-grown hill and monarch mountain,
Rolling river, tinkling rill,—
All above and all around,
Where His love and power abound,
Praise the Lord !—

• Works of His almighty hand,
Ye who in His presence stand,
Own His word !

Rise and shine, O sun, yet brighter,
Over Erin's emerald sod,
Still foul demon-dreams affright her,
Still her sons are far from God :
Mighty Spirit, meekest Dove,
Fount of holy light and love,
Here descend !
Peace, with all her blessings sure,
Mercy mild, and wisdom pure,
Wide extend !

Never before had Eirè's woods and wilds
Hearkened that sound, so heaven-descended, rare,
Heart-thrilling, rapturous, that as it left
The maiden's lips, and floated on the breeze,
The reaper left his work, the hind his toil,

The village-habitants poured forth to hear,
As though their ears had caught a seraph's song
Wafted through middle air. And still she moved
Light-footed as a roe on morning plain
Spangled with dew ; and still her song was heard
Throughout the Isle ; and marvellous the change
That strain hath wrought. Where late the arms of bronze
Clashed in wild warfare, and where rushing hosts,
Like thunder clouds o'er sable Morna's height,
Burst each on each, the morning smile of peace
Shone tranquil. Waving corn and fleecy flocks
Next marked her pathway, and the chiming bell,
In hand of hallow'd priest and saintly sage,
Bade the rude multitude to matin prayer
And evensong.

The maid Heötha hight :

And still her way she wended through the Isle,
As the fair moon climbs the dark vault o'erhead,
Dispensing purest radiance, meekly bright,
In virgin-pride, enwreathed with smiles that told

Of holiness and heaven. One Summer eve,
Just when the chesnut leaves, with opening palm.
Welcomed in greenest guise the sun's return,
By Tara's height she stood ; what time the fire
Of Baal-rites gleamed all the welkin round,
Betokening the bath of blood which flowed
Forth from the victims, gashed with wounds, to lave
The hell-born idol image. Stood the maid
Amidst the crowd of bardic sages, priests,
Seers deeply read in Druid lore, proud chiefs,
Gold-collar'd, saffron-mantled, seated round
The altar-stone, where bled the sacrifice,
Human and bestial, to the god most grim
Of Eirè's worship. There Heötha's voice
Thrilled like the angel strain which filled the skies,
What time, o'er Bethlehem's plain, at midnight hour
Came gladdest tidings to the sons of man.

Then spake the maid of mystery, unknown
By human lore, to her from heaven revealed ;

Taught, too, of old, by prophet and by saint,
Whose words were treasured in the volume clasped
Close to her heart. She told of ONE who reigned
Invisible o'er all ; of ONE who came,
Borne on love's mighty pinions, down to earth
From highest heaven, on mission to redeem
Earth's abject race ; of ONE, too, who abides
Dove-like, indwelling in the homes and hearts
Of men, new fashioned by His power divine.
And loud Heötha cried—" Ye idol-race,
Ye multitudinous host of demons, hence !
And ye, their worshippers, those lies forsake
And worship only GOD—the Three in One,
The Father, Son, and Spirit ! "

Scoffed the crowd,
And raised the chief his hand, in fiercest wise,
As though to strike the maid, and cried aloud—
" Thou liest, prophetess of falsehood ! How
Cans't thou explain the mystery thus proclaimed

As 'twere from heaven? Thou sayest GOD is ONE,
Thy God, while yet thou biddest us adore
The THREE IN ONE thou namest a TRINITY!
'Tis false. Can three be one, can one in three
Be joined? 'Tis false, and we believe it not."

First to high heaven the maid her dark eyes raised,
Then smiled, and bent her gaze to earth; when lo!
Where late the sandy soil lay all around
Barren and dry, athirst for victim's blood,
A carpet, emerald-green and silken-soft,
Sprang round her feet. 'Twas all of triple grass,
Bedewed with glistening pearls pure from the fount
Of the fair sky o'erhead. Heötha stooped
And plucked a gleaming gem. There leaflets three
Together grew and formed one leaf. No word
She spake, but raised the new-born child of earth,
And smiling, pointed to it. Silent stood
In deep amaze the crowd. Then spake the chief—
"Maiden, thy message tell and we will hear:

Nor hear alone, but wonder and believe,
If only to our heart it speak, as thus
These leafy gems of earth speak to our eyes,
Telling of heaven, whence it doth seem that thou
Art sent on embassy to Eirè's sons."

Paled the red Baal-flame before the light
Which, pure and star-like, beamed o'er Tara's hill,
As with fair hand uplift and haloed brow
Her message spake the maid, and once again
In sounds of thrilling sweetness rose her song,
Heard by the listening multitudes around—
The blest Evangel of her Eastern clime.

Ho! to the weary one
 Toil-worn, opprest;
Ho! to the wanderer
 Far from his rest :
Ye who from peace and hope
 Mournfully roam,

Hearken the gentle voice
Calling you home.

Listen the angel-song
Pealing above;
Hark! the Evangel-strain
Breathing of love:
Balm for the heart-broken,
Joy to the thrall;
Hope for the cast-away,
Blessing for all.

Far over hill and dale
Spread the glad sound;
Wide let the joyous news
Echo around:
Freedom, light, liberty,
Purity, peace;
Fetters of bond-man burst
Captives release.

Wider and wider still
Be the strain sped ;
Fair let the banner'd Cross
Float over-head ;
Over land, over seas,
Bid the sounds ring—
Jesus, the Christ, proclaim,
Saviour and King.

Her song Heötha ceased—then downward fell
Idol, and priest, and worshipper, no more
To weave their spell of sorcery around
The “ Isle of Saints.” Then double gladness clothed
Each smiling hill : each vale sent forth the psalm
Of saint secluded in its deep recess ;
While from its fruitful slope, where stood the homes
Of loving labour and pure piety,
The white-robed choir at early dawn and eve
Chanted the hymn responsive. O'er the sea
Came studious youth and wondering sage, to learn

The wisdom shrined in gold-clasped volume rare,
Illumined by the Scribe's most wondrous art
Through years of midnight toil. Oh, hallow'd Isle!
'Thou home of saint and sage, where Royalty
Sate golden-crown'd and taught by heavenly lore,
Her richest offerings casting at His feet,
The thorn-crown'd King, who lived, and loved, and
died.



II.

LONG years have rolled, Heötha, since thy voice
Was heard in Tara's council-hall of kings :
Now, matron-like, thou sittest by the side
Of one, thy chosen lord, whose palace walls
Stand where a goodly river meets the tide
In fairest eddies ; where wide grass-clad plains
And sloping hills most pleasant landscape make.
Thy royal husband loves thee, if those hands
Sparkling with gems, and thy still raven hair
Gold-diadem'd tell truth of kingly love,
On thee in bridal hour lavish bestowed.
But who can say that wealth's most costly dower,
Or gold most pure, or gems most rich and rare,
Can truest tell the tale of truest love ?
Fair is thy face, Heötha, passing fair,
And heaven-ward still thy gaze—yet why that cloud

That veils thy once glad smile? It dwelt not there
When first thy feet trod Eirë's wave-washed shore
And bore thee through her vales. Thou sittest lone :
Where wends thy lord, thy MELECH, in whose court
Thou shinest still—the brightest jewel there?
Stay, hither comes he ; and again thy smile
Beams fitful, like the rainbow in that sky
Which overhangs thee, painting with its hues
The dark though sun-lit cloud.

Thus, seated there
Beside her royal partner, speaks Heötha—
“ Most true, my lord, thou say'st it. I look sad.
Why should not sadness clothe a brow where care
Has found a resting-place, and thence looks down
In silence on a sorrow stricken breast ?”

“ And wherefore sorrows my Heötha ? Why
Doth not her foot-fall lightly press the sward
To welcome my return ? Why not her arms

Be thrown around this neck, as once they were,
After short absence? Now, tho' long detained
By pressing cares of state, when once again
I reach these halls, I find Heötha thus
Abstract and silent, seated in her bower,
With signs of weeping on that face once clad
With joy's most radiant sunshine. 'Tis most strange!"

Answered the Princess—"Strange, indeed, yet true;
And sad as well as true. Bethink thee : years
Have rolled since first, as thy espoused wife,
I paced these palace halls. Children I've borne,
Thy state concerns have shared, and filled the throne
Next unto thine—and not without full share
Of sorrow as of greatness. Where, I pray,
Are those, mine offspring? Safe, thou say'st they are;
Yet are they strange to me, their mother : nursed
And cared by other hands than mine, and taught
By thy permission, yea, command, apart
From her who gave them birth. Melech ! not now

As erst I joy ; and hear from me the cause,
Now that thy presence is vouchsafed—too oft
Distant withdrawn, whither thou knowest thyself,
Though I but scanty know. Hear me, I pray,
As forth I pour the burthen of my heart,
And some of its forebodings, too, reveal.”

“Speak, then, Heötha ; speak, and say the worst
‘Thou hast of accusation or surmise.”

“Neither I thee accuse, nor yet surmise
‘Thy guilt or faithlessness ; yet will I speak.
Melech ! when first this Isle I visited
And trod its plains, green as this emerald cross
Which still hangs o’er this bursting heart, and climbed
Those rugged hills and night-dark woods which clothed
Their sides, entranced I sang my Eastern song,
My own EVANGEL ; and with voice as free
As mountain air, and joyous as the birds
That carolled o’er my head, I woo’d thy sons

To bend their necks beneath His gentle yoke
Who ransomed all. At Tara, as thou knowest,
Chieftains and kings obeyed the CHRIST, and gave
Themselves and theirs to His dominion. Thou,
First my affianced, then my wedded liege,
Did'st yield thee to the CROSS. Thou knowest all
That followed. Years have passed: thy wedded wife
Heötha was and is; the same, unchanged
As when thou leddest me within these walls,
And doweredst me with wealth: did'st place these chains
Golden and gem-adorned, around my neck,
And hang on my free arms these ornaments—
All rare and golden. Then thou saidst they were
Befitting royal state. It may be so.
But, Melech, hear the truth. I am not free!
And what are gems, and gold, and peerless pearls,
Compared with heaven-descended liberty?
I'd rather be the merest mountain maid,
Sun-burnt and kirtled with the scantiest garb
Of honest poverty, than prisoned queen.

'These princely walls, and this so royal bower,
I like them not. They wear a prison guise.
I would be free once more, to wend my way
Through Erin as of old—in matron garb,
Though not as Eastern maid—and sing, as then,
The song of peace I love. I pine to see
The children of my youth, and where they dwell,
And know their tutelage. I will be free !
As well king's daughter am I as thy wife.
'Tho' Eastern suns my brow once tinged, yet still
I was free-born, and will be free, as when
I first beheld thee, and was won to be
The partner of thy life. The sign I see
Of rising ire within thy regal breast :
I would this might not be. But, Melech, hear !
Nor gold, nor gems, nor jewell'd throne, nor all
The regal state which thou hast round me placed,
Were worth one moment of that freedom's life
Such as I shared with thee when I became
The sharer of thy palace."

Darkly lowered
The kingly brow that, until then, had glowed
With strange surprise at the unwonted words
Which met the monarch's ears. Quick he replies—
“It may not be, Heötha. Thou hast sworn
Allegiance unto me, thy liege and lord
As well as husband. Would'st thou leave these walls,
Fit residence for royal matron? Leave
Thy throne, and cast aside these priceless gems,
These golden cinctures which become thy state,
Proof of my love to thee, and wander forth
On fruitless mission—whither, who can say?
This be thy home, Heötha : rest thee here !”

“Melech, thy words are strange, and still more
strange
Thine aspect. Hear me, as the truth I tell.
Thy sayings breathe not soft, as first they breathed
When, at thy wooing, I became thy wife.
What was thy plighted vow? To be my own.

Whose art thou now ? Why these too long delays,
These lingering times of absence, when afar
Thou wendedst o'er the sea ? Thy looks are changed.
It is not eld, nor feebleness has wrought
Thy features to a type so different
That I could almost say thou art another.
'Tis mystery ! I know not what it means.
Thou Melech art, and yet another. Strange
Most strange ! Am I, in truth, thy wedded wife ?
Thou sayest, Yes, and pointest to these gems ;
They are but chains, and fashioned to deceive.
Give me my freedom, as when first I saw
Thy form. That form was kingly then, and still
Bears kingly port : but, as I gaze, those eyes
Record a mystery unread. How is it
That now thou counsellest, yea, dost command,
That here, within this bower, Hëotha shall
Sit sadly brooding o'er the buried past?—
Muse on the kingly one, whom erst she wedded—
On thee, the same, yet not the same, and yearn

Within these clasping arms, with fond embrace,
To fold her offspring? Speak! say how it is
That such things be?"

"Wife, be my will thy law.
Rest here content, as royal matron may.
Thy children are well cared for: other hands
As skilled, if not as loving as thine own
Tend them, as fits the children of a king.
Thou askest freedom: free thou art to range
The lordly lands which round this palace spread,
Its pleasant places, and these ample halls,
Where courtiers wait upon thee. True, that still
Thou lovest to discourse of things divine,
Of holy mysteries and sacred lore
Revealed in thine Evangel. Be it so.
Within these bounds may none dispute thy will:
That will be only mine—and thou art free."

He said, and rose to leave; not as when first

Short leave was taken of his new-made bride,
With holy kiss, and promise of return
From far with speed, but now with hasty stride
And look of sternness. Backward to the towers
Where lay the treasures of his kingdom turned
Heötha, clasped her hands, and downward cast
Her tearful eyes ; and, as they lowly sought
The earth beneath, one object met their gaze—
Lustrous, and rayed with colour, soft, yet bright
And soul-refreshing. 'Twas the cross which gleamed
From out her regal robe : like that bright bow
Which, round the throne above, th' adoring sage
Beheld in vision, from the desert isle
Where, for his Master's sake, in banishment
He pined. And thus Heötha gazed upon
The sparkling relic of the bye-gone years,
When first, with foot of freedom, through the plains
And o'er the hills of Eirè she had sped,
The messenger of new-born peace and love.
She thought, and wept ; then upward bent her eyes,

Darken'd with tears, yet bright with rainbow-hope.

E'en then Heötha sought her lonely bed :
Nor darkening thoughts, nor yet forebodings dire,
Rose to distract her spirits in that hour
Of musing solitude, as o'er her breast
Her hands lay folded. Silent breathed her prayer,
Heard far above, where angel myriads sang
High praise : still higher soared that prayer—
Answer'd in peaceful slumber, pure and light
As infant's pillowed on a mother's breast.



III.

'Twas eve ; and throned on billowy clouds of gold,
Like giant victor after toilsome race,
The red sun sank to rest. A holy calm
Stole over earth and heaven. Within her bower
Heötha sate ; and near her, silent stood
Her lord, returned from absence long and strange.
Oh ! how unlike that loved and loving one
That woo'd and won of yore the royal maid.
Silent the pair remained, in musing sort,
Until, as from the stilly depth of thought,
In solemn accents thus Heötha spake.

“ Sit down, my lord.” In silence he obeyed.
“ In thy late absence on my bed I lay,
And dreaming, or in waking ecstasy,
I cannot tell, this vision I beheld.

I saw thee, Melech, in a court like this,
Rather than this more regal, while there stood
Around thee nobles, barons, belted earls,
Proud mitred prelates, sheriffs, councillors ;
And, at an humbler distance, commoners
Waited on thy behest, in duteous wise,
And marshal'd order all. No Keltic race,
Nor yet of Eastern blood did these appear,
But fair-haired, blue-eyed Saxons seemed they all.
A princess, too, I saw, fairest in form
Of all that courtly multitude : thy queen,
As might be guess'd, for diadem'd she was,
Throned on a royal seat beside thine own,
And purple clad, as fitting royalty.
And then I had a dream upon a dream :
Methought that I before had seen that face
Which in my vision I beheld ; the same,
Yet strangely changed, e'en as thine own appeared.
A vision o'er me stole of early youth,
Of childhood, when I knew and loved a maid

Whose features seemed like hers who filled thy throne.
And dreamed I, too, that thou had'st joined our hands
As sisters, and had'st said that we were one.
And one we seemed, I elder, she the younger,
In vesture like and maiden ornament,
And e'en in features, though a diverse hue
Over our faces mantled. Ha! thou startest.
Say why? Thou hearest but a passing dream,
And hear it out thou shalt. Mark, then, once more.
Thy Saxon queen had waiting maidens nigh
To do her bidding or to swell her state.
Two among these seemed chief: mark, as I tell
Their looks and guise. Why! thy lip quivereth;
Can'st thou not hear a dream, nor be convulsed
With such emotion? Hearken to its close.
I saw, as near thy throne those maidens stood
And looked on thee, while thy gaze on them turned.
Such looks were furtive. On thy Saxon queen
They bent betimes; but envy, jealousy,
And darkening malice o'er each feature stole

As thus they eyed askance her regal state,
With scorn but ill disguised. Yet still they bore
Signs of thy favour. Thou, for so it seemed,
Had'st dowered them with bounty such as kings
Are wont upon their minions to bestow.
E'en now, tho' past that pain'd and shadowy dream,
I can recall their image as they stood
Within thy palace in that vision. One,
Tho' at first view she maiden-like appeared,
Was old and haggard. With cosmetic art
She sought to hide the furrows time had driven
Over her face ; still were they there to tell
At once her age, and falsity, and art.
Most garish were her garments, many-hued,
Bright with vermilion, gold-laden and be-gemm'd.
Sweet odours, as of myrrh and frankincense,
Were wafted from her person as she moved ;
While triple-crowned she was, more gorgeously
Than even the partner of thy regal state.
The second—neither gold nor gems she wore,

Nor gaudy garments : plain was her attire,
And plainly wrought ; no graceful flowing folds
Spread o'er the pavement ; cincture-girt and brave,
Lithe-limbed and agile, tho' in feature plain
The damsel seemed, as tho' from healthful toil
On moor and mountain to thy court she came.
A brass-bound volume in one hand she bore,
And in the other held a silken purse,
Well filled with coinage from the royal mint—
Proof of thy favour, bounteously bestow'd.
Such was the dream I dreamed, the court I saw,
Thy Saxon wife, thy minions, thy estate—
Can'st read my dream ?”

No word the hearer spake ;
One flush of rage ran kindling o'er his brow,
Leaving a conscience-stricken trace behind
Of pallor, where wild passion's path had been.
Silent he sate. Heötha rose and left
His presence, silent, too, and tearless ; still—

That heaving breast where hung the emerald gem,
Priceless and pure ; those deep dark eyes upturned ;
Those blanch'd lips silent moving ; all might tell
What ONE alone knew fully—that pent flood
Of passion strange which surged within her soul.
That ONE beside her stood, though all unseen,
Whose mighty arm upheld her tottering steps,
And whispered peace and hope amidst the storm
That raged within. Thus nerved, Heötha paced
With form erect, and foot unmoved and firm,
For the last time through those proud halls of state,
And o'er their marble floors. Her bower she sought,
Silent and lone ; yet, as its door was closed,
Without stayed regal pomp and pride of place,
Within was light, and liberty, and peace.



IV.

'Tis night, and from her noon, cloudless and clear,
The moon looks down. O'er dew-bespangled lawn,
Bright mountain top, fair river, shimmering
Like molten silver, turret, tower, and town,
Straw-cover'd cottage and baronial seat
Streams forth the heavens' calm smile, inviting all
To peace and rest. Beneath that radiance pure
Heötha slept. But still the tear, new shed,
That stole beneath the long dark eye-lash fringe,
Told what the latest lingering thought had been
Of conscious waking. Is it now a dream
That bids her bosom heave, her lips close press,
Those hands more firmly clasp? Once more a smile,
All radiant, lights her features as of old,
Ere sorrow's shade had o'er their brightness stolen.
Within the chamber where the slumberer lay,

Bright with the moon-beams, suddenly shone forth
A light, not golden, like the solar beam
At height of noon, yet was its brilliance such,
That sun and moon, and evening's brightest star
Might pale beneath its radiance : like that beam
Which filled, of old, the midnight dungeon where
Slept the apostle, chained between his guards,
Waiting the morrow's martyrdom. Thus now,
Throughout that chamber's bound, such brightness
shone

That all beside, tho' bathed in fairest gleam
Of night's high noon, seemed colourless and dark.
Heötha wakes, and gazing through the gleam
With speechless wonder and high throbbing heart,
Sees a fair form, clothed in the hues of heaven,
Stand by her side. Bright beaming was the brow,
Beyond the radiance of the morning star,
And all as brightly pure, of him who there
Gazed downward on the sleeper. From those eyes
Of deepest, brightest blue, mild radiance rained ;

While from the golden locks which parted o'er
His forehead, fair as stainless marble, fell
Shadow-like gleams of glory on the floor.
His countenance most placid, richly dight
With lambent rays, caught from the throne on high,
Was fair, most fair to look upon, yet clothed
With majesty which spake high purpose. Like
To his who erst, borne on the midnight blast,
Through Egypt wended, bent on stern behest ;
What time the Chosen Seed, at Heaven's command,
Stood harnessed for the march which set them free
From centuries of bondage. Such the look
That light-clothed angel bore who stood beside
Heötha's midnight couch. A sword of flame
His right hand grasped ; the other gently waved
Through the bright air around. A startled cry
Had well nigh scaped the matron's opening lips,
When to his own the angel's fingers pointed,
Motioning silence, as these words he spake—
“ Heötha, fear not ! From the shining ranks

That countless stand around th' Eternal's throne,
Awaiting His behest, where night is none,
And ever brightening glows the cloudless day,
I come on errand merciful to thee.
Hast thou not slept, and sleeping dreamed? That dream
Was prelude to my message. From the fount
Of light, which sparkles by the throne of heaven,
Some drops have fallen thus, to bathe the path
Before thee lying. I to guide thy feet
That path to tread have come. These halls, this bower,
This palace, where bland courtiers stand and wait
To do thy bidding and to share thy smiles,
All must be left. Bethink thee of that day
When first, as Melech's queen and consort, thou
This pleasaunce entered. Say, can'st thou recall
The wild wood and the mountain glen—the sea,
Its blue and bounding waves—the winding stream—
The island-studded lake, where silent stood
The oratory, whence, at even-tide,
Rose psalm and hymn, like incense, to the sky,

Calm overarching? Such were once thy haunts ;
There trod thy lightsome foot, fair-sandal'd, free—
Free as the breeze of dawn that sported with
Thy tresses, then ungraced by coronet
Of gems and gold. Then, too, thy heaven-taught song
Resounded o'er Iernè's hills and plains,
Such echoes waking that e'en angel ears
Might bend to hearken. Now thou seem'st a queen,
And clad in queenly guise. Heötha, hear!
Ponder thy dream-taught lore. Say, art thou free?
What is thy true estate? These armlets rare,
These circlets, diamond-decked, which on thy limbs
Were placed with cunning skill and rare device,
What meant they all? I tell thee they are chains,
Golden and glittering, still they fetter thee—
Hold thy free footsteps from that path which tends
Onward and upward; where HE trod who now
Bids thee to follow. Spouse of heaven, awake!
The morning breaks upon the mountains. Rise!
Thus do I free thee!"

Like a cooling breeze
Which fans the fever'd brow of him who sleeps,
Or dreams of sleep, throughout some tropic night,
So seemed the angel hand that lighted down
With wakening power upon Heötha's arm.
Responsive to his soul-inspiring call
Instant her couch she leaves, while all around
Shines light, beyond the glare of silver moon
Or noon-day sun. Rich perfume filled the air,
As though the countless flowers of early spring,
Or bright-robed summer, or the laden breath
Of autumn, fruit-adorned, together poured
Their rarest odours. From the angel's wings
Such fragrance breathed, as through the midnight air
His way he wended to the star-lit sky.
Down to her limbs and o'er her trembling hands,
With awe and wonder, an inquiring glance
Heötha cast. No trace she saw remain
Of gold, or gem, or circling cincture there—
Only, around her neck and o'er her heart,

The cross of emerald hung. Straight to her lips,
Bending, she pressed the green and glancing gem,
Then looked around. Was it a dream, or truth,
A vision'd fancy or reality?

Once more, as woke the morn and rose the sun
In the red East, the glistening pearls of dew,
Spangling the triple grass beneath her feet,
Marked where those feet, with step elastic, trod
Across the wold. O'erhead, the soaring lark
Caroll'd and thrilled. The distant sheep-bell told
Where the flock browsed, and where the shepherd
dwelt.

Bright gleamed the golden dawn o'er lawn and lea,
And, as with lightsome gleaming coronet,
Circled Heötha's brow, while heaven-ward glanced
Her eye, tear-dimmed, but not with grief or shame.
And on the breeze of morning sweetly stole
Her old Evangel-hymn, as forth she fared.

Praise to Jehovah,
 High praise to our King !
Praise for His triumph
 Aloud let us sing.

Grief-laden, prison'd,
 Forsaken were we :
Spake the Deliverer,
 Then were we free.

First-fruit of freedom,
 Unfurl to the blast
The Cross on our standard,
 Wide forth be it cast.

See it float o'er us,
 No ill shall remain ;
Shackle nor thraldom
 Shall gall us again.

Say to the temples,
Once spread o'er our land,
“ Rise from these ashes ”—
Our God gives command.

There let the anthem,
The chant, and the psalm,
Wake, as in old time,
Sweet, solemn, and calm.

Thence to each valley,
Broad river, fair plain,
Borne by the glad breeze,
Shall reach the refrain.

Thence shall Christ's heralds
Their message proclaim
O'er island, o'er ocean,
Far telling His name.

Joy to thee, Erin,
Thou island of saints :
Banished thy sorrow,
Hushed all thy complaints.

Praise to Jehovah,
High praise to our King !
Praise for His triumph
Aloud let us sing !



CHRISTIANUS.

“O mea, spes mea, tu Syon aurea, clarior auro,
Agmine splendida, stans duce florida perpete lauro ;
O bona Patria, num tua gaudia teque videbo ?
O bona Patria, num tua præmia plena tenebo ?
Dic mihi, flagito ; verbaque reddito, dicque,—Videbis :
Spem solidam gero : rem-ne tenens ero ? Dic,—Retinebis.”—

Bernard of Cluny.

CHRISTIANUS.



SONG OF THE PILGRIM.

I'M weary, oh ! I'm weary—
How weary for "THE REST,"
Though it lay in pathless forest,
Where the wild bird builds her nest :
I'd lay these throbbing temples
On a cold uncover'd stone,
If only I might rest me ;
Chill, houseless, and alone.

I'm weary, oh, how weary !
I've toiled till night is nigh,
And sunset calm is gilding
The far-off Western sky :

While languid eyes are closing,
And drooping eyelids weep,
I, too, way-worn and weary,
Would lay me down to sleep.

I'd sleep, where fond ones slumber
Beneath the smooth green sod,
And dream with them of waking,
And rest, like them, with God :
Earth's dreams ! ye all are baseless ;
Earth's hopes ! ye all have fled ;
Earth's joys ! poor vanished visions ;
All, all around are dead.

Earth's flowrets ! pale and pining,
Ye waked to smile and die—
Fain would I seek to find you
Beyond that stilly sky :
Oh ! for the clime all cloudless,
Oh ! for the endless day !

For *there* are hearts that change not,
There love knows no decay.

No pilgrim there sits lonely,
By wayside bleak and bare ;
Nor blighted hopes and broken,
Nor solitude is there.

I'm weary, oh ! I'm weary—

Oh ! now to share *HIS* rest !

Here, once the “ Man of Sorrows,

There, Joy of all the Blest.

CHRISTIANUS.

How holy is this hour of eventide !

How deep the calm which rests on all around !

Long, dark and drear, the pathway I have trod—

A wilderness : but yonder are the gates

Of glory in the West, cloud-pillar'd, high,

And gleaming with heaven's radiance—there, beyond

That rolling river, deep, and broad, and clear.

O, splendour, from th' Eternal's throne ! O, brightness,
Rayed from His brightness, Who is light and life !
Still lead !—I follow. Pilgrimage is past :
My feet have trod thy brink, O Jordan. Here
Rest, to the pilgrim promised, would I seek,
In sight of Beulah and Immanuel's land.

CHORUS OF THE FAITHFUL.

SOLDIER, rest, thy warfare ended :
Triumph on thy coming waits ;
Lo ! thy conquering Lord ascended !
See His train at glory's gates !

Pilgrim, lay thee down and slumber ;
Sleep, as Zion's children sleep :
Angel guards, in countless number,
O'er thy head their vigils keep.
Jordan's waters, cleave asunder ;
Backward roll, ye bars of light !

Realm of joy, and love, and wonder,
Open on the wanderer's sight.

Rest thee, all thy dangers over,
Conflict, pain, and peril past :
Balmy gales from Eden hover
O'er thy dreams, the sweetest, last.

ABADDON.

O LIGHT, I hate thee ! darkness ! thou art mine :
I love thy utter blackness, yet come forth,
At once His face to shun and kingdom mar
Whom once I served, but whom, in fierce revolt,
I left, and leaving left all hope behind.
Ay ! this is earth : I reign and revel here ;
I walk its ways, its cities, and its plains,
And claim them mine. I am earth's god and lord ;
I own its kingdoms, rule its provinces ;
Hate in my heart to Zion and her King,
His subjects, and His laws. Stay ! here I find

One of His serfs. I know thee, Christianus ;
Back to my realm ! thou may'st not thither wend.
Back, back ! I say, and own my sovereignty.

CHRISTIANUS.

GREAT enemy of God and righteousness ;
Fall'n son of morning ! fierce accuser, hence
I am Jehovah's servant, not thy slave ;
Ransom'd, redeem'd, my way I onward hold
To Zion's walls, beyond that swelling stream.
Withhold me not ; day dawns ; I await His call
Whom I obey and love ; not thine nor thee !

ABADDON.

HITHER, ye hosts of darkness ! this, my thrall,
Would leave us, and disown his rightful lord ;
Ay, leave e'en earth itself, and force his way
To yonder realm of dreams beyond the tide
Of Jordan's hated flood. Come, all ye powers
That rule in hell, and would not serve in heaven,
Seize Christianus—seize the recreant slave !

CHORUS OF THE SPIRITS OF EVIL.

FROM the region, dark and drear,
Where no sun illumes the sky ;
Horror's haunt, destruction's sphere,
Dwelling-place of anarchy ;
Come we at his high behest,
Prince of evil and unrest.

Roll, ye thunders, lightnings flash,
Hailstones, mixed with coals of fire ;
Earth, from pole to centre crash,
Clothe your brows, ye skies, with ire ;
Bolts of death and ruin fling
From the whirlwind's vengeful wing.

Crush the wretch who dares decline
Our Abaddon's potent sway !
Quench the lights that o'er him shine,
Drive him on the downward way !
Thus we mock his dying moan,
He shall serve our lord alone.

Turn, servant of our king, hie thee away !
Retrace thy steps : before thee opes its mouth
The dark abyss ; above thee, see, the skies
Have gathered blackness. Thou art his. Return.
We hate the King whom thou would'st seek and serve.
We hate His laws ; we spurn His will and way.
Go on, and perish ! stand, and be at peace.
That flood is deep, its name is death ; withdraw,
Ere in its depths thou sink as plunging stone.
Those mountains, with their city, all whose gates
Seem pearl, are but the pageant of a dream.
Return ! depart ! away, while yet thou may'st
Escape the wrath that glows in our right hands ;
Flee, ere it fall and crush thee into nought !

CHRISTIANUS.

I MAY not turn or swerve : yonder my path,
And it I will pursue, though all the hosts
Of darkest hell withstand. Depart, and leave
My journey unopposed. Zion I seek—

I see its gates of pearl and golden walls :
And thither, in Jehovah's strength, I wend.

SPIRITS OF EVIL.

TENFOLD ire,
Scathing fire,
Downward on the rebel fling ;
Darkest gloom
From the tomb
Fold his spirit 'neath thy wing.

Ha ! he yields,
Strike your shields,
Spirits from the deep abyss :
Hell shall ring
As we sing,
Scorpions glare and serpents hiss.

Triumph now
Crowns the brow
Of our king, who reigns beneath ;

Gloomy grave,
Seize the slave :
Bind him in the chains of death !

CHRISTIANUS.

O, DARKNESS palpable ; O, shrouding shade
What mean ye ? Is my spirit swallow'd quite,
And light extinct for ever ? Oh, this gloom !
I grope upon the right, the left, yet find
No solitary ray. My footsteps sink
Deeper, and still more deep in closing mire,
Nor footing find. O sounds most horrible,
That fill my aching ears, fain would I send
Your echoes from my spirit ; but they seize
All sense within, and whisper sounds of hell.
O Light Eterne ! O God of Light ! have pity :
Send but one kindling ray ; breathe but one sound,
One faintest whisper of faint hope, lest I,
Thy servant, perish ! Help, Jehovah, help !

GABRIEL.

WHO calls—who cries, amidst the fearful gloom
Spread by the Prince of Darkness all around?

CHRISTIANUS.

A VOICE! a whisper struggles through the storm;
Is it a breath of heaven, amidst the gale
Raging around, from out the furnace deep?
Methinks I see a ray, a shade, a form,
Athwart the gloom. Nay! speak; say, what art thou?

GABRIEL.

SERVANT of God, fear not: thy prayer is heard,
Thy sunken sigh: to aid thee am I come.
My name is Gabriel; where springs the fount
Of light, from out the high exalted throne
Of God and of the Lamb, the crystal stream
That glads the golden city—thence I come.
His presence have I left, around Whom wait
The shining ranks of angels, and the host,
Unnumber'd, of the spirits of the just,

Waiting their final glory. Heard thy prayer ;
And I am sent to guide thee through the flood—
To shed this ray of brightness o'er thy spirit.
Fear not, faint-hearted, nor let go thy trust :
With me ANOTHER comes—a Mighty One,
To quell thy fearful foes, and bear thee through
This thy last conflict, to the conqueror's crown.

CHRISTIANUS.

Oh ! thanks to Thee, Great God ! oh ! thanks to Thee,
My strong Deliverer—Thou King of saints !

CHORUS OF THE FAITHFUL.

LORD, most mighty ! God, most holy !
Throned above the starry skies ;
Thence thine eye can reach the lowly,
Hear the tempted when he cries.

God, whose mercy, oh, how tender !
Marks the sparrow as it falls ;
Loving Father, tried Defender,
Hear the helpless when he calls.

Now the night is darkest, deepest,
Loud the tempest, wild the wave ;
Saviour, who thy watch still keepest,
Hear the hopeless—hear and save !

MICHAEL.

It is the voice of prayer ; strong cries ascend
To the Eternal's throne from saints below ;
Nor heavy is His ear to hear, nor short
His arm to save. Yet, 'tis a fearful sight—
The hosts of hell are gather'd, and the gloom
Of darkest death spreads night beneath their wings.
I know their leader—him whom this right hand
Once sent like lightning-bolt from highest heaven,
What time he waged fierce war against its King.
Yonder he stands : while all his forceful wrath
Is spent to bar that passage o'er the flood,
On to heaven's gates, from Christianus. Ho !
Descend, ye angel hosts ! gird on your swords
And follow to the conflict, as of old ;

Yea, oftentimes ; yea, ever, in their need,
Ye ministering aid salvation's heirs.
Scatter that hellish rabblement, and make
A path through Jordan's swelling flood, that he,
Jehovah's servant, may pass o'er, and press
With foot triumphant this celestial soil,
And gain the city of his Lord and ours.

CHORUS OF THE FAITHFUL.

OUR God goes forth to war,
Jehovah is His name ;
The thunder-cloud His car,
His steeds devouring flame.
What foe can stand before Him ?
Who dare His might defy ?
When suffering saints implore Him
He hears and heeds their cry—
Abaddon's host,
Gehenna's boast,
Shall from His presence fly.

Ye mighty ones who stand
On heaven's eternal towers,
Jehovah gives command—
Descend, angelic powers !
Though loud as tempests roaring
Hell's deepest echoes ring,
It's countless myriads pouring
To war against our King—
From Michael's face
They flee apace,
While ye your pœans sing.

MICHAEL.

ANGELS of light, well done ! Your work has sped,
And my command full well have ye obeyed.
Back to the region of unbroken night
Abaddon has been driven, and with him all
His evil crew. No more shall they withstand
The passage of God's servant, yonder, through
That flood, now parting, to make plain his way

To Zion's gates, her towers and palaces,
Where dwells the King Eternal. Speed ye now
Back to your station on her battlements,
And see the conqueror wend his upward way
To glory. Bid your fellow-servants, too,
The shining ones, who tread its streets of gold,
Give him right royal welcome. Blow aloud
The trancing trumpet, strike the thrilling harp,
Spread wide the banner'd Cross ; prepare the crown
To kindle on the brow of Christianus,
As through those gates he passes, 'till he stand
Before the throne, enfolded in the cloud,
Whose brightness no created eye hath pierced.

CHRISTIANUS.

Is it a dream ? Of late I dreamed a dream
Most darkly foul and terrible. My sight
And every sense was buried deep and lost
In all-enclosing blackness. Now I seem
To rise to a new life. Light dawns upon

My soul, waking to strange consciousness.
A sound steals to my ear, so sweet, so strange,
It seems to come from some far distant world,
An echo from eternity, and yields
A foretaste of some coming blessedness,
Such as nor eye hath seen nor ear hath heard—
Listen, oh, listen !—what triumphant strains !

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

GLORY to the God of Heaven,
Glory to the Lord, Most High ;
Backward all His foes are driven—
He hath triumphed gloriously !

Earth, with all her countless voices,
Waving wood and surging sea :
All, around, above, rejoices,
Pealing loud the victory.

Laud Him, angels : saints adore Him,
Sound His praise, ye orbs of light ;

Let the anthem rise before Him,
Praise Him, depths and viewless height.

Praise the Lord of all creation !
Angel voices ceaseless cry ;
Praise the God of our salvation !
Ransom'd sons of earth reply.

Glory to the God of heaven,
Glory to the Lord Most High ;
Backward all His foes are driven—
He hath triumphed wondrously !

CHRISTIANUS.

O joy unspeakable and full of glory !
What strange delight is this ? Low at my feet,
Thy stream, O Jordan, pass'd, I see the earth,
Which late I trod, rolling through cloud and haze :
And lower still, that gulf, where tossing lie
Abaddon and his angels, like the foam
Of angry ocean dash'd against the shore.

Oh ! whither wends my spirit ? It would seem
As borne on chariot wheels up an ascent
Which ever brighter glows. Now, now I see
Near and more near thy gates, Jerusalem,
Thou city of the King. Thou art my home,
My long-sought home. And who are these that crowd
Thy shining walls, and gleam along thy streets
Of golden pavement, beckoning my approach,
And smiling welcome ?—faces known and loved—
The same, yet oh ! how changed ! and that great light
Which streams from out the crowning height, yet leaves
No shade behind it ? Oh ! that central sun ;
Or is it sun, or shining form that lends
Light to that glory ? Spirit of all power,
Oh, bear me up—I sink in this vast deep
Of glory all-unfathomable. Hark !
A sound of many voices, sweeter still
Than all the music, floating from on high,
Which here has bathed my spirit, comes again,
Preluding strain to never-ending praise !

GABRIEL.

WELCOME to thy native sphere,
Ransom'd spirit enter here—
Banish'd sorrow, vanquish'd fear !

Welcome to thy home above,
Bathe thee in the fount of love,
All the joys of Eden prove.

Come, where faith is lost in sight ;
Come, where dwells unclouded light :
Ever noon-tide, never night !

MICHAEL.

WELCOME, soldier of the Cross,
Worldly gain and earthly loss
Thou hast counted all but dross.

Thou hast won and kept the field,
Sworn to conquer, ne'er to yield,
Here lay down thy dinted shield.

Come, and cast thy crown before
Him, Who all thy sorrows bore :
Love and wonder evermore !

CHRISTIANUS.

HERE, on the everlasting hills, I stand,
While o'er these harp-strings strays my trembling hand.
Loud, as from numbers numberless, a song
Echoes the golden aisles and courts along.
Oh ! joy and wonder ! upward tends my gaze,
Lost in love's deepest depth ; yet would I raise
With that adoring throng my hymn of praise.

Where the fount of endless life,
Crystal-clear, begins to flow,
Far above the sound of strife,
Earthly sorrow, earthly woe ;
From the throne celestial leaping,
Purely bright its glad way keeping—

There ascends the song,
Which angel hosts prolong,
With sweetest minstrelsy and voices loud and strong.

Circling round that central throne
Higher up the mount of praise,
Girding it, like golden zone,
Sons of earth their voices raise.
Louder than the bounding ocean,
All its surging waves in motion :
Sweeter far than flute,
Than psaltery or lute,
Those ever-pealing strains angelic ears salute.

Thus let me hearken ere I nearer draw,
My inmost being lost in wonder, love, and awe !

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

THEE we praise, Eternal King,
From whose mighty mandate spring

Worlds unnumber'd, robed in light,
All with matchless beauty dight :
Each Thy power and wisdom telling,
Each creation's anthem swelling,
Till its wave breaks at Thy feet
Fraught with adoration meet.

Thee we magnify, Great Lord,
On Whose life-sustaining word
All that live and move depend
Far as time and space extend :
Thine is guardian-care unceasing,
Watchful, tender, still increasing—
Source undimm'd of life and light,
Wondrous, Glorious, Infinite !

CHORUS OF THE REDEEMED.

OH ! the FATHER's boundless love !
Higher than all height above,

Deeper than profoundest hell,
Where death-shadows darkest dwell ;
Piercing e'en our night, once lying
Where hope's faintest ray lay dying—
Vast, yea, measureless, the grace
Stooping to redeem our race.

Jesu ! Lord, Redeemer, King !
Deign to hear the praise we bring.
Glad we join the angel-song,
Glad creation's hymn prolong :
Still a sweeter strain, and higher,
Waits Thee as as we venture nigher :
Lauding FATHER, SPIRIT, SON,
Through eternal ages ONE !

Lost in wonder's tranced amaze,
Jesu ! on Thy form we gaze :
View Thy wounded, spear-rent side,
Birth-place of Thy spotless Bride ;

See Thy nail-pierced hands and bleeding
Raised, for earth's transgressors pleading ;
See where thorns transfixed that brow,
Crowned with endless glory now.

All thanksgiving, Lord, be Thine,
Majesty and might divine !
Boundless praise ascend to Thee
Long as lasts eternity,
From the day-spring of creation,
Through each kindred clime and nation !
Angel-hosts, earth's ransom'd, all,
Jesu ! at Thy feet shall fall !

AMEN !



WORDS FOR MUSIC.

“Versus inopes rerum, nugæque canoræ.”—

Horace.

WORDS FOR MUSIC.

De,

*Written for the Inauguration of the Organ, Ulster Hall,
December 17, 1862.*

CHORUS.

WHERE the limpid river gliding
Bears its tribute to the main,
Where the dews of morn abiding
Clothe with corn the smiling plain ;
Upward rise adoring voices,
Praising God, All-wise, All-good ;
Universal earth rejoices,
Surging sea, and waving wood.

Praise His name in sounding chorus,
Swell the Organ's tuneful voice ;

Praise Him for His goodness o'er us,
For His mercies past rejoice.
Praise Him, all ye mighty nations,
From all oceans, through all lands ;
Praise Him with your mind's creations,
With the labour of your hands !

RECITATIVE.

Hardy son of toil,
Sage of soaring reason,
Brothers, cease to moil,
Rest ye here a season.
High and low unite,
Hearts and voices blended,
Join our festal rite,
Feud and faction ended.
Banish care and pain,
Smoother the brow of sadness ;
Raise the choral strain,
Roll the tide of gladness.

ARIA.

Thus crown we him, whose generous care
Is spent the sons of toil to raise,
Nor war's proud trophies may compare
With this our meed of peaceful praise.
Let distant ages learn his name
Whose wealth to bless his kind is given ;
And, as we raise the loud acclaim,
Around be shed the smile of heaven !

CHORUS.

Thus crown we him, whose generous care
Is spent the sons of toil to raise.
Praise the God who dwelleth
In the realms of light ;
Praise His name who telleth
All the stars of night.
Roll your notes of thunder,
Cloud and storm above ;
Praise the God of wonder,
Laud the God of love.

Sons of men, adore Him,
 Sound His praises high ;
 Lowly bend before Him,
 Earth, and sea, and sky !



Cantata.

TO THE AVON.

Shakspeare's Birth-Day, 23rd April, 1564.

I.

AVON ! gliding calmly, slowly,
 To thy Severn's peaceful bed,
 Rapt in musings, deep and holy,
 Like a dream of pleasure fled ;
 Wake, fair river, wake and hear us,
 Bending o'er thy waveless face ;
 Fairest spells of fancy near us,
 As thy tranquil path we trace.
 Take the flowers we grateful bring thee,
 Bear them on thy bosom chaste ;

Hear the strain we come to sing thee,
Share the joy to-day we taste.
Fleeting seasons, lustrums rolling
Down the trackless tide of time—
Bells of heaven their loud notes tolling—
Spires that peal their merry chime ;
These have been—yea, mighty nations
Have fulfilled their proud career,
Since thy SHAKSPERE'S weird creations
Rose before his vision here.
Earth, and all of earth, shall perish,
All of time with time departs :
While HIS deathless dreamings cherish
Living memories, loving hearts.

II.

Thrice a hundred years,
Avon, have rolled on
Since a nation's tears
Dewed thy wondrous son.

Sleeps he by thy side,
Where to sleep he came,
Far from life's wild tide,
Swell'd by fear and fame.
From the ends of earth
Pilgrim feet have trod
Round his place of birth—
Where he rests with God.
Jubilee to-day
Reigns around thee, river,
Wending on thy way,
Clear and calm as ever.

III.

Take, oh, take the flowers we strew
O'er thy waters, fragrant, fair—
Rosemary, and with it rue,
Lillies dew-dropp'd, roses rare ;
Snow-drops, snatched from Winter's finger,
Daisies, cull'd where zephyrs linger—

Cowslips, breathing fresh of spring,
Lark-spur, brushed by song-bird's wing ;
Bear these, sweet Avon, to to the deep blue sea,
Love tokens to thy peerless bard and thee.



Song.

MY SAILOR-BOY AT SEA.

WHEN Summer fields are smiling
In all their bright array,
And Summer sounds are willing
Our winter cares away,
I love alone to wander
By ocean, wild and free,
And, gazing far, to ponder
On my sailor-boy at sea.

When Autumn's golden treasures
Are waving o'er the plain,

Once more my fancy measures
The blue and boundless main ;
And while at eve 'tis sleeping
As calm as grassy lea,
My heart its watch is keeping
With my sailor-boy at sea.

When Winter's tempests gather
In darkness o'er the land
I turn me to OUR FATHER,
Who holds them in His hand ;
I know that storm and billow,
Beneath His high decree,
Are safe as softest pillow
For my sailor-boy at sea.

And oh ! when Spring with gladness
Clothes every sunny hill,
And smiles away their sadness
From lake, and lawn, and rill—

Then ocean's waves resounding
Shall sweetly sing for me—
A bark is homeward bounding
With my sailor-boy from sea.



THE GRAVE OF HAVELOCK.

BREATHE gently his name, let it rise from the
ground

Where thousands are weeping, his ashes around ;
The Christian, the soldier, the noble, the brave,
Still calmest in conflict, still foremost to save.

Bring palms for the victor, shed tears for the friend :
A wail from the country he died to defend ;
But deepest and purest the sorrow of those—
The sisters he saved from the direst of foes.

Sleep, soldier of Christ, in a tomb that is meet,
Where Gunga subdued rolls her waves at thy feet ;
The cross of Victoria bright laid on thy breast,
While Britons who loved thee keep guard o'er thy rest.

THE SNOW-DROP.

SNOW-DROP, smiling on the wold
From thy dreary Winter-dream,
As thy dewy leaves unfold

To the morn's awaking beam—

Welcome ! promise sweet of spring,

How we bless thee !

Purely fair and trembling thing,

All caress thee !

Sun-streak on the mountain side,

Of the vernal season born,

Like the mantling smile of bride,

Dimly bright, on nuptial morn—

Welcome to each eye and heart,

As they meet thee :

Bid each Wintry thought depart,

Glad we greet thee !

Yet, nor snow-drop, pure and fair,

Nor Spring's smile, howe'er it be

Glad and welcome, may compare,
Baby mine ! with one from thee—
Welcome to us from above,
Dearest ! fairest !
Token true of purest love,
Richest ! rarest !



CHRISTMAS CAROL.

WINTER rides the howling storm,
Beats the shower and slants the sleet ;
Pallid want, with shrunken form,
Steals along through lane and street :
Pause and pity, passer-by,
List, oh ! list the orphan's cry,
Mark the tear in sorrow's eye !

Cheerful smile the hearth and home,
Plenty crowns each banquet-hall,
G

Welcome greets the guests who come,
Christmas gladness lightens all ;
Think, as thus joy's cup runs o'er,
Want has darkened many a door,
Sighs and sadness many more !

Christians to their temples throng,
Praises thence and prayers ascend,
Anthem loud and sacred song
With the pealing organ blend :
Elsewhere, pain her vigil keeps,
Widow'd sorrow sits and weeps,
Homeless hunger faints and sleeps.

Come, then, ye who love indeed,
Not alone in empty name ;
Bind the wounded hearts that bleed,
Stay the sighs that solace claim :
Then, beneath your own roof-tree,
Joy shall mantle full and free,
And your Christmas merry be !

S P R I N G .

LEAFY gems are on the tree,
Daisies dapple all the lea,
Breezes crisp the laughing sea ;

Smile the plains :
Leave the toil that mates with care,
Breathe the balm of fragrant air,
All the joy around us share ;
Glad Spring reigns.

Soaring lark and linnet gay
Vocal render sky and spray,
Every echo seems to say,

Rise and sing !
Join the chorus, swell the song ;
Hill and vale the chant prolong ;
Nature's voices, sweet and strong,
Greet glad Spring.

Leave the study, leave the loom,
Busy mart and murky room ;
Leave the city's twilight gloom,
 Spring is here !
Mirth and music overhead,
Bloom and sunshine round us spread,
Dull cold Winter's reign is fled—
 Hail, new year !



HYMNS
AND
SACRED MUSINGS.

Χορὸς εἰρήνης,
Οἱ χριστόγονοι,
Λαὸς σώφρων,
Ψάλλωμεν ὁμῶν θεὸν εἰρήνης.

Clement of Alexandria.

H Y M N S .



A D V E N T .

MORNING cometh, wanes the night,
Dawns the day that endeth never ;
Gird your loins, ye sons of light,
Darkness fades and flees for ever :
In the East His sign appears,
Crown of all the coming years.

Through the skies a voice is heard,
Trumpet-tongued, more deep than thunder ;
'Tis Jehovah's mighty word,
Kindreds, nations, hear and wonder !
Spread the tidings far and wide,
Triumphs now the CRUCIFIED.

Fair as early morning-beams,
O'er the countless dew-drops shining,
Wake the saints from peaceful dreams,
Slumber and the grave resigning :
Glad they rise, their Lord to meet,
Follow to the judgment-seat.

Deep the awe, the fear, the joy,
Now the Son of man surrounding—
Highest Angel-hosts employ
All their powers His name resounding—
Christ they praise, with one accord—
Christ the Saviour, Christ the Lord !

Oh ! when round the throne we stand
On that glorious Advent-morning,
Gazing on Thy brow, Thy hand,
Clothed with radiance, raised in warning,
Jesu ! may Thy smile of love
Our eternal gladness prove.

A D V E N T .

HAIL Redeemer, throned in glory,
Lord Supreme of realms above,
Mercy, peace, and pardon bearing
Downward on the wings of love !
Mystery of depth untold,
Angel hosts with awe behold,
Low in adoration bent,
O'er the depth of Thy descent.

Lowly Saviour, manger-cradled,
We, too, wonder and adore ;
Hail Thee from Thy throne descending,
Son of God, all worlds before ;
Dawn amidst our darkest night,
Harbinger of life and light,
Brightness of the Father's face,
Rescue of our ruined race.

King of kings, in glory seated,
 Once again, where swells the hymn,
 Pealing wide from all creation,
 Echoed loud by Seraphim :
 Jesu ! loved and longed for, come,
 Make our world Thy promised home,
 While around Thee loud prolong
 Angel hosts their Advent song !



A D V E N T .


DAWN, oh, dawn, thou day of gladness !
 Rise, O Sun of Righteousness ;
 Drive away these clouds of sadness ;
 Shine, thy waiting Church to bless.
 Long we sorrow, long have prayed ;
 On thy Word our hope is stayed ;
 Rend, O Lord, the heavens asunder,
 While the nations gaze and wonder.

Come, Lord Jesu, we implore Thee,
Orphans here, despised and lone ;
Let Thy ransomed ones adore Thee,
Raised to Thine eternal throne ;
While exulting we shall share
All the joy that waits Thee there ;
Every tongue, and tribe, and nation,
Praising for the great salvation.

Take Thy throne, great King of Zion,
Bid creation's chorus ring ;
Mighty Victor, Judah's Lion,
Now Thy well-won trophies bring :
Death and Satan are Thy prey,
Darkest regions own Thy sway ;
Ride o'er all Thy foes victorious,
Deathless conqueror and glorious.



THE NATIVITY.

HILD of virgin-mother born,
Bowed beneath our grievous load,
Outcast, helpless, poor, forlorn,
Son of man, great Son of God ;—
Thee we worship, Thee adore,
Living, dying, evermore.

Cradled in the manger vile,
All-despised and comfortless ;
Lord of boundless realms the while,
Whom the highest angels bless ;—
Thee we worship, Thee adore,
Living, dying, evermore.

Counted lowly Nazarene,
Though of Judah's royal race ;
Ever wearing meekest mien,
Yet the Lord of life and grace ;—
Thee we worship, Thee adore,
Living, dying, evermore.

Vast the measure of Thy love,
Stronger than the grasp of death,
Higher than the heights above,
Deeper than the depths beneath ;—
Thee we worship, Thee adore,
Living, dying, evermore.

Hearts and voices upward rise !
Join to swell Redemption's hymn,
Pealing first through Eastern skies
From the choir of Seraphim ;—
Thee we worship, Thee adore,
Living, dying, evermore.

Sound Immanuel's Name abroad,
Far as earth and ocean spread ;
All creation own and laud
Christ, of all the glorious Head ;
Thee we worship, Thee adore,
Living, dying, evermore.

CIRCUMCISION.



BLOOD most precious, blood most pure !

For us thou flowest ;

Token of love, deep, vast, and sure !

To us thou showest.

O wailing Innocent ! that cry

E'en to heav'n reacheth,

While to the angel hosts on high

Deep lore it teacheth.

And teach us, too, Thou Sufferer meek !

By Thy good Spirit ;

May we, blood-sprinkled, ever seek,

Thee to inherit.

Thee in Thine infancy of days,

Thee through life's story,

Thee, passing through death's darksome ways,

Thee in Thy glory.

Oh ! circumcise each earth-born heart,
From earth's pollution ;
Cleanse each foul stain, 'till all depart
'Neath Thine ablution.

Lord ! from Thine upward, blood-track'd road,
Ne'er may we wander ;
While Faith points to the fair abode
That waits us yonder.



EPIPHANY.



KING, most meek, most lowly,
O Child, how wondrous fair !
O humble roof, yet holy,
For angels worship there.

'Neath Thee the Virgin mother,
Folds in her arms of love,
That new-born babe, no other,
Than His who reigns above.

Shine, Star ! of all the fairest
That grace the Eastern sky ;
Bring gifts, the noblest, rarest,
That richest realms supply.

Come, wonder and adore Him,
Come, render homage meet ;
Earth's wisest bow before Him,
Fall lowly at His feet.

Oh ! height of love, transcending
Thy star-encircled throne,
Smile on us, as here bending,
We worship Thee alone.

Bright streak of heavenly promise,
Amidst our darkest night ;
Shine on, nor e'er hide from us,
Thy cheering, guiding light.

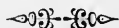
L E N T .

JESU, once on earth a stranger,
Though the Lord of earth and heaven,
Rudely cradled in a manger,
Only shelter to Thee given ;
King of glory, Child of woe,
Praised above, despised below,
Help Thy servants' faith to see
All Thy love's immensity.

Jesu, Saviour, meekly bending
Where the crowd of sinners stood,
At the Baptist's summons wending
Far and near to Jordan's flood ;
Aid us to adore Thee, thus
Least and lowest made for us ;
Bearing all our guilty load,
Laid on Thee, Thou Lamb of God.

Jesu, Lord, deserted, drooping,
 'Neath the tempter's fiercest power,
All the hosts of darkness grouping
 Round Thee in that dreadful hour ;—
 Strong in weakness, Mighty One,
 All-unaided and alone,
 Thou the foe hast foiled, and we
 More than victors are, in Thee.

Jesu now in mercy hear us,
 Hear us from Thy throne on high,
Ever be Thy presence near us,
 When the evil one is nigh :
 Once forsaken, tempted, tried,
 With Thy tempted ones abide :
 Shield, and succour to the end,
 Mighty Saviour, faithful Friend.



E A S T E R .

ROLL back, ye bars of light,
Wide open, gates of glory ;
All heaven, behold the sight,

Attend the wondrous story :

Ye angel hosts that crowd
Around the Conqueror's car,
Proclaim His praise aloud,
Whose mighty ones ye are.

Rise, saints, your Lord to meet,

To praise and to adore Him ;

Come, worship at His feet,

And cast your crowns before Him.

Lift up your heads, ye gates,

And let the Victor in ;

Eternal triumph waits

The Vanquisher of sin.

At morn the Saviour rose,
Like giant from His slumber ;
Fled all His mighty foes,
And who may tell their number ?
Death and the gloomy grave
Have yielded up their prey ;
Almighty now to save,
On high He takes His way.

Ride on, ride on, O Lord,
The golden gates enfold Thee ;
In highest heaven adored
Our eyes may not behold Thee :
Yet hear, oh ! hear our praise,
Great Saviour, God and King,
As thus our hymn we raise,
Our heart's devotions bring.



GOOD FRIDAY.



H ! the grief, the shame, the sorrow,
Thorn-crown'd King, with bleeding brow !

How shall saint or angel borrow

Theme from Sufferer such as Thou !

'Neath Thy cross, dread throne of anguish,

Faith would stand in fear to gaze ;

See Thee bow Thy head, and languish,

Plunged in dark, unknown amaze.

Hear Thee, as by God forsaken,

Send to heaven Thy pleading cry ;

While the dead from sleep awaken,

Veil'd in gloom both earth and sky.

Depth of mystery ! transcending

Height of thought, in earth or heaven :

Woe unfathom'd, love unending,

Life, through death, mysterious given !

Jesu ! by Thy pains unspoken,
Rending rude Thy spotless soul ;
By Thy blood, love's wondrous token,
All Thine anguish, shame, and dole,

Cleanse our vileness, by Thy Spirit,
In each heart Thy throne restore :
Saviour ! Thine be all the merit,
Ours, to wonder, and adore !

Hear us, when, in sorrow bending,
Sin's deep wounds to Thee we bring ;
Help us, when, at brief life's ending,
To Thy Cross for aid we cling.



H O L Y B A P T I S M .

ENDURING is a mother's love,
It hath beginning, but no end ;
Years may roll on, and seasons move,
It ne'er can falter, change, or bend.

A mother true can ne'er forget
The babe that nestled at her breast ;
For her love's toil knows no regret,
No sorrow burdens her unrest.

Yet love there is, than hers more deep,
More pure, with sorer travail fraught,
E'en *His*—the Shepherd of the sheep—
Whose life with His own life He bought.

Take, then, this *Lamb*, dear Lord, 'tis Thine,
We only render back Thy own ;
And seal it with the holy sign
That marks Thy chosen ones alone.

Oh ! never, in that coming hour,
When fierce shall rage the mortal strife,
May Thine Almighty love and power
Fail to defend Thy servant's life.

Soldier and Servant, true and tried,
All conflict, death, and danger past,
May he stand Victor at thy side,
And hear Thy glad “ *Well done !* ” at last.



THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD.

GIVE to the earth its dust,
Give to the grave its prey ;
To God, the great, the just,
Then bow the knee, and say—
Father ! Thy will be done,
Most holy, meet, and right !
Thus pray we, as thy Son,
In sorrow's deepest night.

And Thou, the Christ, most high,
Behold Thy mourners here :
Hearken our lowly cry,
And consecrate each tear.

On Thee, when 'neath Thy breast
First beat a human heart,
Earth's woe, and wild unrest,
Could deepest wounds impart.

Then hear us, as we bend,
Earthward 'neath sorrow's shade ;
Hear, and Thy Spirit send,
Dear Lord, to lend us aid.
Thou who, where Lazarus lay,
Didst silent stand and weep,
Here, o'er our kindred clay
Kind guard vouchsafe to keep.

Thou who didst lay Thee down
To rest from deadliest strife,
From mockery's robe and crown,
From brief yet saddest life.

Who o'er the darksome grave
Didst hope's fair radiance shed,
Almighty now to save,
To Thee we yield our dead.

In surest hope we give
Our loved, not lost to Thee :
Soon to awake and live
From calmest slumber free.
Oh ! dawn thou glorious day !
Oh ! come great Conqueror come !
Ride on Thy glorious way,
And bring Thy banished home !



HYMN FOR ALL SAINTS' DAY.



H ! the joy to hold communion,
Lord of all, by faith with Thee !
Humbly to the throne approaching
Thine unclouded face to see.


Oh ! the bliss, our song to mingle
With the multitude's above !
Thus to swell the boundless chorus,
Rais'd to Thee, great God of love !

One to feel with highest angels,
Ever waiting on Thy will !
One to be with saints departed,
Living in our memory still !

Where the Martyrs' noble army,
Crown'd and white-robed round Thee stand,
Upward borne, on faith's strong pinion,
We would join that glorious band.

Thee, the Lord, creation's centre,
Thee, the Christ, Redeemer, King ;
Thee, in jubilee united,
Earth and heaven exulting sing.

H A R V E S T H Y M N .

LL bounteous Lord of harvest,
Beneath whose gracious hand
A thousand hills, rejoicing,
Spread blessing o'er our land ;
The clouds above drop fatness,
The valleys sing below,
While wave the sheaves, bright golden,
The streams in gladness flow.

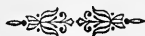
All praise to Thee, Creator !
Thy tender love and pow'r
Still clothe the grass with verdure,
With fairest hues the flow'r :
All praise to Thee, Preserver !
Thy ceaseless guardian care
Spreads wide its shade and shelter
O'er earth, and sea, and air.

From Thee the dew descended,
From Thee the gentle rain,

Thine was the sun that ripen'd
Each bending field of grain :
Thou crownest with Thy gladness
This joyous Autumn-tide ;
While peace and smiling plenty
O'er all our homes preside.

Praise for our labour ended,
For barn and store-house filled !
Praise for the ripe fruits gather'd
From fields that labour tilled !
And when Time's course is over,
Life's day of travail past,
May we be safely garner'd
With Christ's own sheaves at last !

AMEN.



HYMN OF PRAISE.

September, 1870.

PRAISE the Lord, ye hosts above,
Praise Him for His boundless love.
Praise Him, sons of men below,
Laud His mercy's ceaseless flow :
His the hand that open'd gives
Good to all that breathes and lives ;
His the arm our life defends,
His the goodness never ends—
Praise Him, earth and heaven above,
Praise the God of boundless love !

Golden fields of ripen'd grain,
Plenty clothing hill and plain,
Garners fill'd with winter store,
Corn-heaps spread on threshing-floor,—

These the gifts His love bestows,
Each His tender mercy shows—

Praise Him, earth and heaven above,
Praise the God of boundless love !

Glad we raise our choral strains,
For the peace that o'er us reigns ;
Prince of peace ! Thy sway extend ;
Soon may war and tumult end ;
Oh ! let strife and sin be hurl'd
Far from this, Thy ransom'd world—
Let the nations join to raise
Loud Redemption's song of praise—
Praise Him, earth and heaven above,
Praise the God of boundless love !

AMEN.



SACRED MUSINGS.



THE BANKS OF DOON.

SWEET Bard of Ayr, these lonely paths were thine,
These sights and sounds of nature gladdened
thee ;

Thy heart once thrilled responsive, as now mine,
Amid this scene of summer jubilee.

Blithe speeds fair Doon along her wonted way,
As erst she sang sweet solace to thine ear,
Her wild flowers' bloom, her wild birds' warbled lay,
Still joyous are, as when her Bard was here.

Nature's calm loveliness is all unchanged
As when roamed here, in boyhood's spring, her
child ;
As when, o'er bank and brae, joyous he ranged,
And hymned her praise, in murmurs sweet and wild.

And still, methinks, his spirit weaves its spell
Weird-like and deep, within, above, around,
Emotions, fancy fraught, awake to tell
That Doon's fair grassy side is hallow'd ground.

Would that thy feet, poor Bard, had never left
These paths of love and peace, to wander far
'Mid devious ways, of peaceful blessings reft,
Which here for nature's children treasured are.

Oh ! that through Nature's voice a holier still
Had reached thine ear attent, and woo'd thee on,
A yet more peaceful path to tread, until
Thy spirit to heaven's fount of light had gone !

Alas ! that chains of earth should bind a soul,
Destined on high to soar, unshackled, free ;
Alas ! that such degenerate control
Should mar thy spirit's high-born pedigree !

Yet whispers Hope, that He whose arm can save,
At sad life's close, when death and darkness lower,
Smiled on thy deepest gloom, and smiling gave
Light to thy spirit in that awful hour.

Whispers,—those early lessons pondered here,
And at the humble cotter's hour of prayer,
At length awaked, to dry the anguished tear,
And ray with peace the pallid brow of care.

Flow on, fair Doon, the music of thy voice,
The fragrance of thy banks and blithesome braes,
May bid another spirit yet rejoice,
When mingled with the thoughts of by-gone days.

Farewell to thee ! and thanks, thou peaceful stream ;
This lonely hour, thus spent by thy calm side,
Shall leave its record, as of happy dream,
A gleam of sunshine o'er life's troubled tide.

June 4, 1849.

S U R S I M C O R D A .

RIVERS, though parted far, to ocean run,
Clouds soar on high, yet end their course on
earth ;

Sparks seek their life-fount in the glorious sun,
Thus all created things declare their birth.

All, save the human sprite ;—wild wand'ring far,
A cloud, careering on each passing blast ;
Unsphered and pathless, like some restless star
On the dread waste of being blindly cast.

Poor wanderer turn, nor the sole outcast prove
Of all creation ; turn thee, where alone
Thy parentage is heralded—ABOVE,—
There be thy resting-place—Jehovah's throne.


That seek, and stedfast track the upward way,
With thy Creator's viewless glory bright ;
The end—His presence—and thy guiding ray,
Shed from the day-spring of eternal light.

Nor yet despond, as upward thou dost tend ;
Not few the flow'rets which around thee spring,
Fragrant and pure, upon whose petals blend
Hues bright as those which glow on angel wing.

Drops, too, shall dew thee from life's flowing fount,
Taste these, but strain to reach their stainless
source,
Seek yonder height, till on its topmost mount,
With joy untold, shall end thy finished course.



A R E V E R I E .

 CLOUD reclining lay at heaven's high gate,
Waiting the coming dawn's first sun-lit hour,
When all creation should, in solemn state,
Arise, to greet its God's awakening power.

But tedious rolled the night away,
And robed that cloud in garment gray,

As the dew uprose from stream and hill,
And seemed its bosom but to fill
 With darkness—for it wept
 As though it had not slept
The live-long night, but had sorrowed on
For the morn, when dreary night were gone.

And it came—the morning, rosy-clad,
With a gush into life, how bright, how glad !
Mine eye looked up, but turned again,
Dazzled and dimmed with the crimson rain
That showered from the source of light above,
So gorgeous, that in vain I strove
To look, for eye might not behold
That sea o'erhead of liquid gold.

Then I glanced at the cloud, and it smiled,
Tinted with radiance mild,
How lovely none might say
Who had not seen its skirts of gray,

Late dark and cold, now glowing
With that smile of heaven's bestowing.

And I thought—oh ! I thought—there's a lesson here—
Lord, teach it me !
Should earth and earthly things appear
Cloud-like and dark, weeping and drear—
I'll wait on Thee.

Thy smile can make all darkness glad and bright—
And gild with joy the longest, dreariest night.



THE HOUSEHOLD ALTAR.

Lines designed for a Book of Family Prayer.

WHEN fair morning, garbed in gladness,
Streaks the radiant Eastern skies,
Chasing far night's dewy sadness,
Hence let grateful prayer arise.

When mild evening westward tendeth,
To her cloudy couch and dim,
Where night's shade with silence blendeth,
Hence be raised the parting hymn.

Morn and eve, around this altar,
Glad may hearts and voices blend,
Ne'er may faith's devotion falter,—
Still let incense sweet ascend :
Praise to Thee, who all sustainest ;—
Praise to Thee, Eternal Son ;—
Praise to Thee, who ever reignest,
With the Christ and Father One.



THE FLOWER GATHERED.

I HEARD a prayer ascend from earth to heaven,
“ Bless, Lord, our child, and make him Thine !”
it cried ;

“ Thy Spirit to His opening heart be given !”

“ Amen !” a tender voice, and low, replied.

Once more I heard a strain ascend on high,
In blessing to the Giver of all grace,—
“ Lord, on our child of promise bend Thine eye,—
Hope of our years,—fair scion of our race !”

Yet, once again, I heard a bitter cry,—
“ Oh ! spare, good Lord ! nor cut our flow’ret
down !”
And burden’d was that prayer with tear and sigh,
“ Hear, God of pity ! hear, and hide Thy frown !”

Too soon a sound up-rose, from hearts sore rent,
“ Woe worth the day ! our child ! our only son !”
But when affliction’s direst pang was spent,
Submissive, silent, came, “ Thy will be done !”

Once more, I heard an echo, solemn, clear,
Like softest whisper of a summer-eve ;
Downward it floated to mine open’d ear,
And seemed the hidden home of God to leave.

“The prayer is heard,” it said, “the promise seal’d,
Gaze upward, *Faith*, not earthward, not around ;
Banish’d be sorrow, wounded hearts be heal’d ;
The lamb is folded, Christ’s young soldier crown’d.”



A D R E A M .

*“I dreamed a dream, ’tis past,
Too sweet it was to last.”*

WHENCE and whither, Baby dear,
Sleeping, sleeping !
Spring is on us, bright and clear,
No cloud weeping.
Bud and blossom, bank and brae,
All are smiling ;
Song-birds wake, and soar away,
Care beguiling.

Still thou sleepest, daughter mine,
Calmly, purely ;

Lonely, peaceful, half-divine,
All securely.
Art thou wearied with the way
Left behind thee ?
Dost thou shun earth's glaring day
Lest it blind thee ?

Ah ! though still thy sleep and long,
Thou art teaching
Deeper truths than sage's tongue,
Solemn preaching.
For, thine eye, whene'er it opes,
Whispers to us
Sermons true, of joys and hopes
Sent to woo us.

Sent to woo us from below
Upward yonder ;
Where, by joy's perennial flow,
Angels ponder.

Blest the FATHER's hand that sends
Thee, love's token !
Love divine, that never ends
True, unbroken !

Ah ! thou smilest, Baby love !
Dost thou hear us ?
Or, do angel-wings above
Hover near us ?
Dearest ! thus may angel-hands
Guard thee ever ;
Bear thee in their unseen hands,
Leave thee never !

May the God of angels, too,
Be thy Keeper,
Life's uncertain journey through,
Tiny sleeper !
Then, as now, may thine eye be
Smiling, tearless !
And thine heart from sorrow free,
Trusting, fearless !


PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

Sonnet.

TAKE staff in hand, young pilgrim, ere the height
Of life's hot noon allure thee to the shade
Of treacherous bye-paths and illusive glade.
Morn is the time for travel, and the night
Slow comes, yet sure, when oft way-faring wight
On the lone mountain-tops, alas ! has strayed,
To ruin by the Tempter's wiles betrayed.
Oh ! haste thee, then, while yet the heavens are bright,
And dew is on thy path : though strait it be,
Upward it tends, to where no sin, nor pain,
Nor sorrow enters. Lift thine eyes and see
The CITY's golden gates, where those who gain
The crown, as Christ it gained, shall welcomed be
With psalm and shout, yea, all heaven's minstrelsy.



J E R U S A L E M .

ITY ! brighter than the sun,
Than the silver moon more fair ;
Height, by saints and martyrs won,
Climbed through want, and woe, and care—
Oft, methinks, I see thy gates,
Each a pearl, of purest ray ;
Hear the jubilee which waits
Those who walk thy golden way ;
View thy walls, as crystal clear,
Built with gem and precious stone ;
Bring thy vision'd glories near,
Catch the radiance of thy throne ;
Pause to hear the central psalm
Rising round the fount of love,
Where the white robe and the palm
Grace that host, all hosts above.
And should earth come gliding in,
Such brief moments' bliss to blight—

Strong temptation, dream of sin,
Cloud of sorrow, shade of night—
Still thy brightness o'er me shed,
Draws to heaven the silent prayer—
Oh ! the paths of peace to tread !
Least and lowest—only there !



OCCASIONAL PIECES.

. Ubi quid datur otī
Illudo chartis.

Horace.

OCCASIONAL PIECES.

I N K E R M A N N , 1 8 5 4 .

Extract from a Soldier's Letter to his Wife, after the Battle—

"Thank God I am safe! when I knelt in my tent at night to thank Him for my safety, I felt sure that you and the children had been praying for me, and that your prayers were heard."



LONELY English cottager

Knelt by her lowly bed :

It was a widow'd spot to her,

Yet wept she not the dead.

Beside her knelt a tender child ;

Asleep another lay :

Unconsciously the baby smiled ;

The boy said, " Mother, pray ! "

The mother prayed, though scalding tears

Ran down her pallid cheek ;

She prayed to Him who ever hears,
 Though lips refuse to speak.
For him she prayed who, from her side,
 To regions bleak and far
Had gone, to stem the crimson tide
 Of carnage and wild war.
Short was that prayer : to Him it sped
 Who sees the sparrow fall—
To shield from death that loved one's head,
 To stay the murderous ball.
“ O Saviour ! from the carnage home
 The father, husband, send ;
From blood, from sin, oh ! bid him come,
 Thou great, almighty Friend ! ”
“ Amen, O God ! ” the boy replies :
 “ Now, mother, let us sleep,
Sweet mother ! dry these weeping eyes ;
 God will my father keep.”

The morning dawn'd on Inkermann,

Through clammy mist and cold ;
O'er vale and height the war-tide ran,
Midst foemen stern and bold.
Like thunder, 'gainst the mountain's side
Muscovia's myriads broke ;
And Britain's sons withstood the tide,
As stands her forest oak.
Back rolls that flood—again it heaves,
Then backwards rolls again ;
And with each surging movement leaves
Whole ranks of earth-trod men.
A cloud spreads o'er that countless host,
Blood-fringed ; it reels—it flees :
Where now last midnight's ban and boast ?
What scatter'd hosts are these ?

The sun rose high on Inkermann :
It was a field of blood ;
Yet, stern and proudly, in the van
Old England's heroes stood.

And Gallia chased the fleeing foe ;
Her vengeful volleys sped,
Till mount and valley, high and low,
Lay cumber'd with the dead.

The red sun sets on Inkermann,
And leaves a fearful sight :
Oh ! ne'er again may Britons scan
So dread a field of fight !
And from that low and tented ground,
Where England's legions lie,
Ascends full many a thrilling sound
From those who bleed and die.
And ministering angels there
Swift ply their task of love ;
Good hope, strong aid, they joyful bear
From Him who reigns above.
He hears, amid the battle's height,
Prayer's low and earnest breath ;
And rays of Heaven's own purest light
Gild e'en that field of death.

Night closes on the sanguine scene,
And from a darksome tent,
The dying and the dead between,
The voice of praise is sent.
A lonely man, who, 'mid that day
Of strife, and blood, and death,
Had fought unscath'd, now kneels to pray
And praise, for life and breath.
And in that hour he thought of her ;
He thought, and thankful, smiled—
The lonely English cottager,
The praying wife and child.
“ God heard their prayer ;” he thought again :
Once more he praised, and wept ;
Then, midst that host of weary men,
The Christian soldier slept.



THE MIGHTY ONE AND THE MIGHTIER.

*The death of the Czar Nicholas,
March 1, 1855.*



STERN and stalwart man
Sits solitary in his regal hall,
Though shades of deepening twilight round him fall,
And there has sate and mused, since eventide began.

Amidst his kingly state,
Obedient to the lightest warning sound,
A thousand serfs and ministers around,
Upon their mighty master's summons trembling wait.

Yet heeds he not : alone,
With gaze on misty visions straining set,
Hands clench'd, and teeth in firmest fixture met,
From his pent heart he breathes a long-drawn, stifled
groan.

Beneath that strong right hand
A crumpled missive lies : it came from far,

With words of haste and dread and sanguine war,
Midst Ottoman and Russ, in the Crimean land.

Starts from his dream the Czar,
And instant, at his bidding, lights appear,
While through the Winter-palace, far and near,
Sounds of disaster steal, and yet more fearful war.

“ Ho ! bear this mandate wide ;
Through Slave and Cossack to Siberia’s snows,
To Caucasus, and where the Euxine flows,
To Lap, and Fin, and where my Tahtars fiercely ride ;

“ To arms ! for heaven and ME !
No man in all my Empire may abide
Unarm’d : one whelming blow shall soon decide
Who on this Earth’s wide space her mightiest shall
be !”

That dread ukase is sign’d,
And sent with speed of terror through the land,

To arm, for deadliest conflict, every hand ;—
Haste, millions, haste ! nor heed the woe ye leave
behind !

'Tis midnight ; and his rest,
That mighty one, encanopied in pride,
Has sought, yet restless rolls from side to side,
Ah ! rarely calm repose on such a brow has prest.

His eyes are closed in vain :
The vision rises of a gory field
Where Russia's chivalry is forced to yeld,—
'Tis *Eupatoria* meets that frowning gaze again.

* * * * *

Down from his vision'd throne
Another mighty one doth fiercely speed,
With heart and hand prepared for darksome deed,
And on his dread intent thus wends he forth, alone.

From other worlds he hies :
Beyond the path of changing moon, or sun,
Or where the stars their noiseless journey run,
His dark and silent Empire dim and shadowy lies.

His face is hidden deep
In a gray cloud, veiling those hollow eyes,
Where untold mystery enshrouded lies,
With noiseless tread he comes, like dream of haunted
sleep.

Athwart a field he glides,
Whose corses yet unburied thickly strew
The blood-stain'd sod ; a lurid smile gleams through
That cloudy veil ; then onward, whirlwind-throned he
rides.

On through the wide domain
Of that unquiet sleeper hath he flown ;
'Then stands beside his couch : one stifled groan,—
And, DEATH ! another King confesses THOU DOST
REIGN !

A CRY TO THE CROWD.

*A fragment from an unpublished Drama.**July 1864.**SCENE—Ultonia—Eirenophilos Loquitur.*

SEE how it raineth ; and the drops are red !
A tempest wildly rages, and its gusts
Are not of Earth. Around, above, is borne
A sound more awful far. The shrilling curse,
The execration, shouts that breathe of hell,
The red Sirocco of wide-wasting wrath,
The blasting joy o'er what makes angels weep,—
Such the fell storm which revels round, upborne
On an arch-demon's wing.

Just God ! it rains
Again ; and every drop is reddest blood !
These gluts that stain the corners of the ways,
The flinty paths of late where labour trode,
Are blackest gore. Dear Lord ! it is of brothers !
Ho ! pause, ye madden'd crowds. Oh ! stay and
hearken !

If that within those palpitating breasts,
Where burns a flame, kindled in deepest hell,
There linger yet one throb of Earth,—Oh ! if
Ye be not all transfigured quite, and made
Into his likeness, whose behests ye've wrought,
Mad with the wine of Sodom ;—stay and hearken !
Look at your hands ! They're red with kindred
blood.

Look in each others' faces ! are they human ?
Look at these mangled limbs ! Hear that wild wail,
The wail of widowhood and orphanage ;—
See this pale brow, redden'd with oozing brain,
This face, which once bore semblance of the God
Who made it, and yourselves, His handiwork,
All smeared with gore, and jelly-like, and swollen,
By bludgeon-blows. The wife who kissed, yestreen,
That face, would know it not, on this dark day !
The little-ones, that clambered to his knee,
Would loathe, and screaming flee that father now !

Look round : yes, see the theatre of woe
That circles you. Here were your orgies held.
'These roofless homesteads, doorless, windowless ;
These fireless hearths ; these crying innocents
Your bludgeons drove from school and tenderness
To death and hate ;—out, out upon ye all !
'The very hordes of hell, whom thus ye served,
Might turn their backs upon your company,
Midst acts and scenes like these.

Woe worth the day !

Woe worth the day ! when deluge, such as this,
Burst o'er its bounds, and desolated all,
Around, beneath, making a wilderness
Where late a garden smiled.

Who sent it forth ?

Ay, who shall answer that ? who raised this storm ?
Who cleft the bank, and bade these waters flow,
This wave of bitterness, and hate, and death ?

Draw near, ye coward, carrion-hearted crew,
That stand aloof, and shame to meet the gaze
Of fellow-men. How will ye meet your God's ?
Ha ! skulking scribes, fine Journalists, forsooth !
Look here, and see how nobly ye have wrought !
Ye blatant demagogues, with voices loud
And gesture fierce, who prated late of Law,
Justice, and Country, Rights of men, Reform,
Ascendancy, the glorious Constitution,
Your Liberty of Conscience ; and the rest
Of that vile cant on which ye rang the changes,
And called it Patriotism. Where are your tongues,
Your noise and courage now ? was it for this
Ye battened on your victims, and proclaimed
The coming age of liberty and light ?
And ye !—oh ! ye be-dizen'd sepulchres,
Ye black-gown'd mockers of the priesthood ! ye
Whose mission was to preach goodwill and peace,
Fulfill'd by yells of faction, party, strife,
Where are ye now ? Stand up and face the flocks

Thus tended, taught, hounded to blood and death ;
Christ all-forgotten, in the fierce crusade
Ye heralded. Reap your reward !

O sirs !

It is a day of darkness and of gloom.
I dare not rail, yet is this pent-up heart
Swell'd nigh to bursting. Country, brotherhood,
Home-stead and hearth, the tenderest ties of earth,
The fruit of honest toil, the noblest rites
Of holiest faith, Love's fairest flowers and fruit ;—
All, all are sweeping by, in that foul stream,
Torn by the hand of faction from the side
Of yonder mountain, where it lurked and boiled,
Fed at its roots by Hinnom's foulest flood.

O men ! O brothers ! will ye have it so !
Is there no spot of human flesh and blood
Within those hearts of stone ? Are there no founts
Of human feeling, 'neath those glaring eyes,

Whence tears might rain, and prove ye yet are men ;
To wash these stains from your polluted hands,
To send one covering cloud to angry heaven,
And draw down mercy, e're its vengeance strike ?

Ah ! then ye weep : thank God for those deep groans,
Heart-felt at length ! Send up your strongest cries
To highest heaven. Down, low upon your knees !
Ay, lower still, into the very dust,
And there lay every head, while every heart
Is on the bosom of your mother laid,
And smites to hers in penitential throbs.
Mourn, mourn, O land and city ! Merchants mourn,
Sheriffs, and Councillors, and Magistrates ;
All people mourn ! The rich, the poor, the babe,
That hangs all-helpless at the mother's breast,
And the strong father. Hear, O heaven, the cry,
And be thy bolts of vengeance laid aside.

Now, by the land that gave us common birth ;

The wombs that bore us and the paps we sucked ;
Oh ! by the love of heaven, the dread of hell ;
'The joys of paradise, the dole of doom ;
'That love which yearned from the Eternal throne
To lowest depth of human misery ;
By HIS, the Christ of dark Gethsemane
And shameful Golgotha ;—hear, one and all !
Vow to offended heaven, that never more
Shall strife, and party, and ensanguin'd feud
Drive God and human nature from your hearts
To make them demon-haunts. Amen, Amen !

Oh ! men and brothers—weep, and pray, and vow,
Each rise, and grasp the proffered hand of each,
Then love and labour—live and die, in peace !



THE BURIAL OF PRINCE ALBERT.

December 23, 1861.

DIMLY wound the plumed array
Sable-clad, and mute with woe,
From the darken'd portal, slow ;—
Bared each head along the way.

Constant boomed the minute-gun,
Drooped the Royal standard's fold,
All around the tidings told
That a Great-one's course was run.

And the silent-rolling tear,
Down the cheek of old and yung,
Tells, more plain than voice and tongue,
That the Good lies stricken here.

In that home, where princes sleep
'Neath the ancient chapel floor,
Regal scion, monarch hoar,
Stand the mourners,—stand and weep.

In their midst the Great and Good
Lies, cut down like goodly flower,
Shed before the Autumn-hour,—
Therefore mourns the multitude.

On him lay a people's care,—
Him a partner tried and true,
Loved ; and sought to think and do,
Counsel'd by his wisdom rare.

He a mighty nation's trust
Owned, and kept unsullied. All
Wailing now his noon-day-fall
Knew him wise and felt him just.

Therefore 'tis a nation's woe
Darkly girds these mourners round :
Never wider-wailing sound
Rose to heaven from grief below.

Pealing organ, chant and hymn,
Blazon'd hatchment, banner brave

Drooping o'er the open'd grave,
Torches glare 'midst shadows dim ;
These--and last, the drear bequest,
 " Earth to earth, and dust to dust,"
Tell how e'en the mighty must
Gather to the common rest.

Sinks the bier, slow, still, and deep,
 Dimly down its dark descent ;
O'er it orphans' sobs are blent
With such tears as orphans weep.

On that breast lay sword and casque,
 Place a crown, with jewels bright ;
Kings are crown'd for birth or might,
This was won for nobler task.

For him no war-beacon flamed,
 He could boast no human hearts
Rent and blighted. Science, arts,
Him their Prince and Patron claimed.

All, besides, of good and true
Whispered to us from above,
Won his worship, had his love,
Princely aid and service, too.

Lower sinks the vanished bier,
Trumpets speak woe's pageant o'er,
Earth can add no tribute more
To the honours render'd here.

Stay ! one other offering comes :
Noiselessly a step draws nigh,
Hid from gaze of curious eye,
Low, among the kingly tombs.

On that coffin-lid are seen,
Silent-placed, twin chaplets fair,
Fragrant violets, wound with care
Through bright moss, dew-dropped, and green.

At the early morning-tide,
Sister-orphans' loving hands

Culled and wove these simple bands,
As they thought of him that died :

Thought, and wept, and kissed each flow'r,
Emblem of the Good and Meek :
Placed it there, and bade it speak,
Fragrant of affection's power.

And beside these crowns are laid
Gathered flow'rets: purely white,
Shines that central one, as light
Piercing e'en through death's dark shade.

These with silent tears are dew'd,
Tears whose bitterness is known
By the widow'd heart alone,
Shed in widow'd solitude.

Royal gifts ! oh ! leave them there :
Richest gems might purchased be ;
But with those here laid on thee,
LOVED AND LOST ! may none compare.

Nay ; not lost : the setting sun,
Cloud-encircled, sinks to rise
Fairer far in Eastern skies
Through the dim night-watches won.

So, beyond the darkness here,
Dawns the resurrection-morn,
Bright with joys as yet unborn
All undimmed by cloud or tear.



ON THE DEATH OF GEO. LILLIE CRAIK.

June 25, 1866.

AS falls the soldier on some foughten field,
War's banner bravely waving on before ;
With heart and hand that never knew to yield,
All-dauntless stricken, ere the fight be o'er ;—
As sleeps the reaper, midst the heaps of corn,
Fell'd by the swarthy hand, ere sinks the sun,
Whose arm has strewn the grain, from early morn,
Then rests beneath his head, his task scarce done ;—

Thus, with the drops of toil upon thy brow,
Thine eye undimm'd, still nerved for work thy frame,
Friend ! hast thou heard the call to rest thee, now,—
Heard and obeyed, as from thy Lord it came ?
Thy sun sank not at noon, nor yet went down
Midst cloud and darkness, as on wintry day ;—
Just as an autumn-eve, with golden crown,
Glowing, yet peaceful, silent glides away.
Strong-minded, forceful, labour-fraught thou wert,
Yet patient, gentle, ever mirthful, mild ;
Stern in Truth's cause, as man with weapon girt,
Still moved at Sorrow's tale, like very child.
Rugged thy path and toil-worn ; yet, around
Breathes many a fragrant flower, nursed by thy hand ;
And duteous way-farers shall still be found
To track thy foot-prints through our father-land.
No trumpet blared its war-note o'er thy grave,
Nor civic pomp, nor herald-rite was there ;
Yet " dust to dust " most true affection gave,
Deep sorrow mingling with the parting prayer.

Mayhap this lowly resting-place may prove
 A shrine for holy thought, in years to come,
 When filial Reverence, and musing Love,
 With pilgrim-foot shall stand beside thy tomb.
 And some, whose steps first 'neath thy kindling smile,
 Up Poësy's fair hill aspiring trod,
 May hither wend, after long years of toil,
 To plant fresh flow'rets o'er this sacred sod.
 Calmly and gently hast thou laid thee down,
 Thine eye still heavenward, whence the summons
 came ;
 Sleep,—till thy hand shall reach to take the crown
 The Christ shall give, to all who loved His name.



ON THE DEATH OF J. W. B. ARCHITECT.

1869.

In Memoriam.

SLEEP where the hand of friendship fond hath
 laid thee,—

Sleep where the tear of love bedews the sod ;

Rest where nor friend can fail nor foe upbraid thee,—

Rest where the weary seek repose—with God.

Clouds o'er thy morning gathered : sadly, dreary,

Pilgrim of promise ! closed thy life's brief day ;

Ere its noon-height was reached, alone and weary,

Though bravely struggling, didst thou wend thy way.

Then sank thy sun, ere yet mild eve had found thee,

Cloud-covered, hasting to the distant west ;

And thou to slumber yieldedst, while around thee

Tenderly watched the few who loved thee best.

Brief span ! stern strife ! who is there has not striven,

Worthy to leave his mark on Memory's page ?

There lies no path to praise, to fame, to heaven,

Save o'er that height around which conflicts rage.

And thou hast conflict known ! Life's battle over,

Calm be the slumber of thy peaceful grave ;

Uncrown'd by blazon'd arms, yet o'er it hover

Bright memories, like sunlight o'er dark wave.

Methinks I see a youthful dreamer wander,

Broad-browed and pensive, near the haunts of men ;

By silent stream and mead he loves to ponder,
Then homeward turn, to toil and dream again :
Views in far vision wondrous forms up-springing,
Temple and tow'r, proud palace, noble's hall ;
Smiles at the syren song young Hope is singing,
Smiles, yet still follows where his musings call.
Where Art reveals her countless bright creations,
Where Science preaches to the wond'ring crowd ;
Where Commerce spreads her mart for distant nations,
Sending from quay and shore her navies proud ;
Where, too, The Cross o'er Christian temple glistens,
Whence praise and prayer in mingled incense rise,
Where the rapt multitude still stands and listens,
Woo'd from earth's vanities to seek the skies ;
There is thy field, young dreamer ! thou hast ta'en it ;
These be thy monuments that round us stand :
Fame ! didst thou seek it ? Honour ! didst thou gain it ?
Answer ! the echoes of thy native land.
Then rest thee, Friend and Brother, toil nor sorrow,
Care nor care's shadow can thy spirit reach :

Tears such as ours from hope a brightness borrow ;
Labour and love like thine Life's truest lesson teach.



CHERBOURG IN FIFTY-EIGHT.

I.

SAY, summer-sun, hast thou beheld
A fairer, gladder scene,
From east to west, through all thy course
Wide as that course has been ?
Hast thou seen brighter-flower'd meads ;—
Rivers more blithely flow ?
'Neath all thy path did orange-groves
More fresh and fragrant blow ?
Or didst thou mark more grape-clad vines ;—
Fields of more golden grain ;—
Gardens more fresh and trimly pranked,
In all thy wide domain ?

And say—did swain and village maid
More gaily, deftly dance
Than midst the hamlets, o'er the lawns
Of sunny, smiling France ?
See yonder crowded capital,
For ball and masque array'd,
Loud laughter reigns on boulevard wide,
And joy on the parade ;
Where myriad soldier-citizens,
Are practised for the strife,
While thrilling sights, and mimic fights
Make glad the Townsman's life.
Yet one there is, amidst it all,
With pale and care-worn brow,
Alone and far apart he sits
Silent and thoughtful now ;
Those sounds seem but to clothe that brow
With darker, deeper care,
And none is near that reverie,
So sullen-sad, to share.

He starts—"They shout again ! again !

What mean they ? peace or war ?

Why ! on a thousand missions

I've sped them near and far.

Algeria's sands—Sebastopol—

Kathay remote from home ;—

My eagles proud and bayonets

Begird the walls of Rome !

The wide, wide sea ! my gallant fleets

Cruise round each bay and coast,

'Mid Polar ice, and tropic tide

My standards flaunt and boast ;—

And yet they shout, and still they cry

And clamour "War or work !"

I've tried it. How I've tried it—

Bear witness Russ and Turk.

Still restless heaves that human tide ;

Then whither ? land or sea ?

Roll on ye seething millions,

But leave my crown to me !"

With lip comprest and murmuring

He ponders, while his gaze,

To all the thrilling present lost,

Rests on the future's haze.

Sudden he strides the chamber through,

Then stands, nor speaks the while,

And o'er that pallid visage plays

A new unwonted smile.

His Sovereign will straight he indites ;—

With more than lightning-speed,

The trembling wire a message bears,—

Ye nations ! now take heed.

Whither then speeds it ? What the word

That voiceless message brings ?

Summons it armies to the field ?

Shakes it the thrones of kings ?

Bids it proud navies bend their prows,

Their snowy wings outspread,

For near or distant enterprise ?—

For what that mandate sped ?

II.

Within her bower a lady sits
Hard by the deep sea side,
Beneath, a score of good oak-ships
Secure at anchor ride.
Hers are the prows that anchor there,
And o'er the bounding main
A flag unconquer'd wide they bear,
Wide as that ocean-reign.
No foot of tyrant ever spurned
That lady's island-home ;
His distant threat may vaunt itself
But never nearer come.
Nor Slavery dares those prows to cross
O'er ocean's pathway wide,
As ever free and fearless
Its billowy plains they ride.

III.

That lady's hand a packet holds—
She breaks its seal and reads ;

A flush has mantled o'er her cheek,
A moment's pause succeeds :
And then a smile, once more she reads,
Then frankly smiles again ;
An instant calmly thinks—then speeds
An answer from her pen.
As 'neath the height, outstretch'd she sees
Those stately vessels lie,
Mantles a bright flush o'er her brow,
Joy glances from her eye.
Soon circled by that navy's pride
O'er the blue wave she floats,
While peal around their thundering sound,
A thousand brazen throats.

IV.

The autumn-sun slow westward sinks,
Raining his golden shower,
On rippling wave and arsenal,
And cannon-crowded tower.

Beneath, a navy proudly rides,
A gay and gorgeous sight,
Its level yards and towering masts
With countless streamers dight.
And topmost floats the dancing flag
Bright-streak'd with colours three,—
Full gallantly all flout the breeze
That bears away to sea.
Midmost, on lofty quarter-deck
Paces a silent man,
While peering far his glancing eyes
The western waters scan.
'Tis not the broad sun's setting state
That rivets thus his view,
Though bright with gold his cloud-girt throne,
And rich the welkin's hue :
But fixèd is still that straining eye
On yonder distant speck,
Nor heeds the gorgeous, golden rays
The western sky that deck.

Another rises to his view—

Another—upward glide

Tall forms which, cloud-like, bear along

That sun-bright evening-tide.

They come—they near—before each prow

White foams the parting wave,

Nor e'er, till then, those castled cliffs

Such thundering echoes gave.

From height to height the booming sounds

Midst cloud and darkness rise,

Fleet sends to fleet the stern salute

Till fade from view the skies.

Ceases at last the deaf'ning din,

The golden eve shines clear,

And loud rings forth, from sea to shore

A thrilling British cheer.

Thy height, Lahogue, erst heard that sound,

A hundred years, and more

Have sped their course, since last it rang
Around thy shelving shore.
'Twas victory then inspired the shout,
Now peace bears joyous sway,
As twice ten thousand Britons cheer
In Cherbourg's spacious bay.

V.

High festival in Cherbourg reigns,
Its harbour, towers, and down,
While countless navies o'er its tide
Send glancing brightness down.
Blithe is the fête, wide-spread the feast,
In mansion proud and hall,
While welcome bland, and joyous peace,
Reign smiling over all.
The Ruler of the million-host
Has grasped the fair right hand
Of her who o'er proud ocean reigns,
From Freedom's favour'd land.

The red-cross and the tricolor
Float proudly o'er that bay,
Nor cloud appears in yonder sky
To mar the festal day.

VI.

Now, o'er the calm blue waters
With slow and stately grace
The good tall ships of England
Their homeward track retrace.
VICTORIA waves adieu as sinks
Her fleet from Gallia's sight,
While Cherbourg sends the greeting back
With all its brazen might.
Her Consort, too, and Commoners,
Britannia's Knights and Peers,
Bend on fair France their farewell glance,
Amidst the seamen's cheers.
And well-betide thee, gallant land !
As thus our navies part,

May kindred ties be closer drawn
Between each nation's heart.
Soon may the tide of glorious light,
And truth that maketh free,
Shed purest radiance o'er thy soil,
Ennobling thine and thee !



PARIS IN 1870.

WHAT means the sable pall, thus darkly drawn
O'er all thy brightness, city of the fête ?
Thy children, joyous late, now seek the dawn,
As only midnight watchers seek and wait.
Where now those myriad lamps, whose dazzling light
Outshone the sun, at brightest noon-day glow ?
Where all thy meteors, soaring to the sight
Of gazing multitudes, entranced below ?
Deep silence rests on thy Elysian plains,
Still solitude broods on thy field of Mars.

Hush'd are the sounds of traffic—fled thy gains,
Forgotten all thy pomp of mimic wars.
Ceased is the viol, ceased the tabret's sound,
The merry mazes of the dance are still ;
Where late the brimming wine cup circled round,
Tears falling fast, each eye dejected fill.
Is it the sigh of autumn-wind afar,
That o'er the darkened sky thus moaning comes ?
Or does the ear thus catch the distant war,
The dying groan, the roll of muffled drums ?
Hearken that shriek ! It is a mother's cry,
Piercing the midnight air, for offspring slain :
Hearken that low-breath'd plaint, that stifled sigh,
It is the widow's wail, desponding, vain.
Lift up thine eyes, thou stricken city, see !
See overhead those characters of fire ;
Read there the burning message sent to thee,
Read it, like mourner, clad in dark attire.
Nor let the lore vouchsafed be sent in vain,
As erst to Babylon's exulting king :

Bow to the dust, proud city, nor disdain

The hand upraised—its vengeful bolts to fling.

ONE rules above. JEHOVAH is His name.

The dust around His chariot-wheels that rolls
Is dark with judgments. His devouring flame

Consumes proud monarchies, as parchment scrolls.
Provoke Him not. He will be God alone.

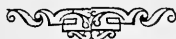
His praise and worship should thy temples fill.
No earth-born idol may usurp His throne,

No earthly counsel may dispute His will.
His law shall be all nation's law, their guide ;

His word, His day, His service be supreme :
Woe worth the land that owns a God beside,

And thus dare dream its wild, delusive dream.
Then lay thee in the dust, proud Gaul, and prove

That thou art truly great by bending low ;
So may these clouds of wrath descend in love,
And morning gladness gild thy night of woe.



ROME IN 1870.

TWAS silence in Saint Peter's, whose proud
height,
Cloud-veil'd and dim, seemed vanishing from sight ;
Curtain'd with mist the giant-structure lay
But half revealed on that eventful day.
Now on its crowning cross, in gold array'd,
A struggling beam, with languid radiance, played,
Then sank amidst the massive clouds which there
Hovered, like gazing giants, in mid air.
Within was silence, save, while surged the crowd,
Echoed along the aisles a murmur loud—
“ *He comes !*” then low, in meek prostration, all
Before the high-borne Pontiff downward fall.
Within a spacious chamber, hid from view
Where none may enter save the bidden few,
Who from all lands, o'er every sea had come,
The pall'd and mitred prelates of proud Rome,
In reverend guise his Sovereign will await,
Who sits enthron'd in more than regal state.

The solemn mass is sung ; the incense cloud
Rises, those awful mysteries to shroud.
Backward its fragrance rolls ; then rises slow
A strain, from voices sweetly blent below.
Louder and louder swells the choral sound,
'Till, echoed by the gilded vaults around,
It fills the vast expanse ; then dies away
As sunlight dies, at golden close of day.
'Tis silence still, save that one thrilling call,
Ear-piercing, shrill, sounds through the darksome hall
What means it ? 'Tis the summons issuing
Forth from the presence of the great Priest-King.
The question has gone forth—" Is my decree
" Infallible, from taint of error free ?
" Henceforth, through ages yet to come, for aye,
" Shall men my utter'd words, as God's, obey ?"
Through tedious months, and solemn high debate,
In her conclave Rome's councillors have sate ;
The hour of fix'd decision now is nigh,
" Anathema" be he who dares deny.

That voice again is heard, and, as each name
Falls on the ear, response is still the same.
“ *Placet*,” still “ *Placet* ;” such the echo given
To His high will, who rules, depute of heaven.
One feeble voice is heard “ *Non-placet*” say—
Another,—and the murmur dies away.
Forth goes the word—“ Infallible is he—
“ Vicegerent here on earth of Deity !”
'Tis done ! no more need heresy's alloy
The truth becloud, the Church's peace destroy.
Come all ! who fear or doubt, who seek release
From error's anguish, here find rest and peace !
Beneath this awful dome one sits as God,
Vanishes heresy before his nod.
To teach, decree, to heal, to loose, to bind
Omnipotent, for Rome, for all mankind !

Hearken ! What sound is that ! What sudden crash
Rocks the high dome ? The lurid lightnings flash.
O'er every face around is paleness spread,

While, meteor-like, bright sparkles dance o'erhead.
Through the long aisles and vaulted corridors,
The thunder's voice its awful echo pours ;
Darkness within, save as, at each rebound,
The herald lightning wildly leaps around.
Far in the distance, dark and dimly seen,
Pallid and faltering, yet with up-lift mien,
The wearer of the triple crown appears,
Unbroken still by weight of care and years.
In his right hand the fatal scroll he holds,
That more than mundane destiny enfolds ;
By its decree to one, on earth, is given
The attribute, erst wielded but in heaven.
Henceforth, above all law is set that throne,
One reigns beneath, as one on high, alone !

The scroll is read. One glimmering taper sends
Its light, where dimly light with darkness blends.
'Tis read ; and rises, like a mighty wind,
A storm of plaudits, round, beneath, behind.

The signal giv'n, without the cannon's throat
Down to the city sends its loudest note.
Clang the loud trumpets, roll the rattling drums,
Along each crowded way the message comes,—
“VIVA LE PAPA INFALLIBILE !”
“Christ's Vicar, God on Earth and Lord is he !”

Hark ! that response ! once more the thunder-cloud
Dashes to earth its volume, long and loud :
Again, throughout Saint Peter's vasty space
The livid lightnings rush, in ghastly race.
One other shout—another peal of hands,
A rush without—then void its vastness stands.
Back borne in state to his secluded home,
In darkness hies the prelate prince of Rome.
Ah ! who may tell the movements of that mind,
When pomp and pride, and shouts are left behind !
What thinkest thou, priest-king, in solitude,
Alone with God ? Dare we on thee intrude ?
Enthroned o'er all earth kingdoms sole supreme !

Is this reality ? Is it a dream ?
And if a dream—say, is it false or true ?
If false—thou dreamer, deeply shalt thou rue ;
Yea, haply loathe thy dream, when all too late,
Fled is that vision, fled thy tinsel'd state.
Say, when thou standest, Pontiff, face to face
Before the King of kings, the God of grace,
Whose thunders, from thy feeble, faltering hand
Thou durst essay to fling round every land—
Shall kneeling crowds, as here, thy titles own,
Or, scorning, leave thee desolate, alone ?

The pageant o'er, once more Italia's sun
Clothes in fresh light each thing he looks upon :
They were but passing clouds his face which veiled,
His smile is now with double gladness hailed.
Bathed in the rain-flood, once again stands Rome,
Still gleanis afar her central, gilded dome.
Yet many a thoughtful glance and downcast eye
Read silent lessons, from each passer-by :—

What meant that fearful tempest, sudden hurl'd,
From heaven on thee, thou Mistress of the world ?
Why sped these lightning-flashes, fork'd and dread,
Why burst these thunder-clouds, loud overhead ?
Why, at the moment God's Vicegerent rose
To his due place, came signals such as those ?

Who may such questions answer ? None. Yet hear,
Thou ancient city. Rome, bow down thine ear.
Thy day-dream past,—thy Pontiff seated there,
Earth's sovereign lord, aloft in Peter's chair,—
Undazzled face reality, and see
What mightiness, in truth, remains to thee.
Where are thy arms ? thy warlike Pontiff's boasts,
Thy court, thy cardinals, thy mail-clad hosts ;
Thy prelates in all lands ; all nations bow'd
Submissive to thy laws and mandates proud ?
Thou sittest queen of all the earth ! say, where
Are thy dominions ? View the empty air,
See these cloud-castles, based on floating mist,—

Such are thy realms, believe it as thou list.
Awake, thou city of the past, awake !
Hear thou the truth, for truth's, for thine own sake ;
Hear it, and hearing, hide thee from the scorn
Too sure to overwhelm thee, at the coming morn.
Lo ! in the east the glorious light appears
Heaven's day whose dawn but gleamed through rolling
 years.
Falsehood's foul dream, man's hate and tyranny,
Before its rising orb shall fade and flee.
Oh ! come fair day ! glad Sun of suns arise !
Gild with thy light our long, long darken'd skies !
Rise Italy ! Rise ancient, Christian Rome !
Shake off thy night-mare thralldom ! Rise and come,
Fairest and first, as in the olden day,
To meet the coming Christ, and own His sway !



LINES SUGGESTED BY A FESTIVAL OF
PAROCHIAL CHOIRS.



DAY of sunshine, era glad and golden !

When Christ's Evangel graced the "Isle
of Saints !"

Thrice happy nation, when, through ages olden,
All sounds were gladsome—none heart-rending
plaints :

When from each saint-erected fane ascended
The solemn psalm, glad chant, and hymn of praise ;
When golden-collared king and chieftain bended
Before each shrine, bright with devotion's rays.

Ah ! day of cloud and darkness ! hour of sorrow !

When strife intestine and a foreign yoke
Shrouded thy sun, Iërne, and each morrow
But darker seemed, beneath affliction's stroke.
Prostrate thy temples, hushed thy strains of gladness,—
Thy priests forgetful of their country's rites ;—

Religion turned to moping or to madness—
Thy Church's rulers—mimes or parasites !

O dawn of better day ! once more up-springing
Fair Hope smiles o'er this erst benighted land !
Again, Jehovah's awful praises singing,
Her priests and people in the temples stand.
Again, from white-robed choir and organ pealing,
Voices of loud thanksgiving heaven-ward soar ;
While crowds, all lowly round our altars kneeling,
Proclaim the reign of death and darkness o'er.



Sonnet.

A D L Y R A M .

SILENCE ! ye trembling strings ; and rest thee
here,
Companion lov'd of many a by-gone hour,
Since life's young morn first owned thy mystic pow'r
That silent grew, as year stole after year
In limpid stream, while yet nor hope nor fear
It's surface wave-like stirred. When, too, the cloud
Of sorrow gathered, and when care's cold shroud
This spirit wrapped, still was thy solace near,
In whispers from the better land. See, how
Comes Evening with her sunset-fading smile,
And breathes of rest and peace. Then slumber thou.
Still, if thine echoes, lingering long, the while,
Assuage one pang, smooth one care-furrow'd brow,
Not all in vain the task thus ended now.











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